A trained dog is a good dog

Jan Meyer
I would like to express my thanks to the members and trainers of Sun Valley Dog Training club for the pleasure to work with you and your lovely dogs over many years. Your concerns and needs provided me with the topics and reasons for starting a website. To Colin, my son, for the website and being so patient in attending to my many problems at odd hours and to Phyllis, my wife, who was the one who encouraged me to write this book.

Each of the dogs I have owned, past and present, added to my knowledge and understanding of dog behaviour. They were the ones on whom I tested and refined my training methods. I shall never forget, Basie and my German Shepherds, Killick, Coxun, Gambit, Bosun, Tandy, Coyote, Juno, Quant o and Polo for their love, loyalty and protection.
INTRODUCTION

I got my first puppy on my sixth birthday. Basie, a Fox Terrier, became my constant companion and the first dog that I learnt to love and with whom I shared real-life experiences. I felt his pain as his tail was docked, was bitten by him in the face after head-butting him on all fours over his plate of food, felt sorry when he was car sick and felt very lonely when he was lost and delighted when he was found.

Killick, my first German Shepherd, called an Alsatian then, gave me my first attempt at obedience training. I joined the Western Province Alsatian club, came fourth in the club championship and eighth in the provincials. Winning was not as important then as the knowledge that I was able to get him to do clever things. At the local school where Phyllis, my wife taught, her pupils would place all twenty-four of their pencils in a row. She would touch one and place it somewhere in the line and Killick, without fail, would, to the delight of the class, find it.

Psychology is the science of human and animal behaviour. As an educational psychologist specializing in the learning difficulties of Special Needs children, I also became interested in the behaviour of all our dogs. They all started with basic obedience training and where possible were entered in obedience trials.

At Sun Valley Dog Training club I took over when a trainer was needed, possibly because of the many successes of my dogs. The teacher in me led me to hand members of my classes detailed notes for “home work” on what was taught during a
lesson. These notes centred more on teaching **basic obedience** concepts like the Sit, Recall, and Down etc. Soon I started a **website** where club members could log on to refresh their memories.

At a chance meeting with an ex club member whose dog had successfully finished training, I naturally enquired about his dog. He assured me that the dog was still very obedient but, “He still messed in the house.” I realised then that he had brought his dog for training to the club but we did not attend to his real problem because he did not tell us about it.

Since then, the last five minutes of all training sessions are spent discussing problems that dog owners may still experience at home. This is a compulsory session to give everyone in the class an opportunity to learn about solving behaviour problems. My website added a **PROBLEMS** section in which we try to assist dog owners with their difficulties at home.

During my stint as chairman of a local pro-life rescue facility, TEARS (The Emma Animal Rescue Society) I introduced the OPEN PAW program for the many neglected and abused dogs. Building on the great work done by Kelly Gorman and Dr. Ian Dunbar, I arranged for dog handlers to come train at my club for free if they bring one of the rescue dogs. They were taught how to bond with a dog, get voice control over the dog and did **basic obedience training** with it. Soon we were able to get some dogs to pass the **Canine Good Citizen Bronze Test** and even the Silver level. These dogs have now become so much more ready for adoption. I have extended the same free offer to anyone kind enough to adopt a dog from a rescue facility to prevent these dogs from going back because of behavioural or training problems the owners may experience.
What is important to note is that “A TRAINED DOG is a GOOD DOG” but only if we are able to teach GOOD habits and are able to eliminate all bad ones.

This publication is aimed at helping puppy to settle successfully at home, to attend to problems as they may occur and to give some advice on the different levels of obedience training, all in one publication.

Jan Meyer
PART ONE

Puppy
CONTENTS

Introduction .............................................................................5

1. Puppy Comes Home ...............................................................9
2. Puppy’s First Year .................................................................13
3. Feeding .............................................................................16
4. Bite Inhibition .......................................................................20
5. Socialising ........................................................................24
6. House Training Puppies .......................................................29
7. In-Car Sickness/Nervousness .............................................36
8. Destructive Chewing .............................................................44
9. Jumping Up .........................................................................48
10. Playing with your Puppy .....................................................52
11. “COME” ............................................................................55
12. Clicker Training .................................................................61
13. Getting started: Heeling ......................................................64
14. Start: Attention & Come .....................................................67
15. Puppy Recall .....................................................................73
Most adults have experienced having had a family dog during some part of their childhood. They usually can recall many pleasant memories of happy times spent with the family dog. It is quite natural then, that as adults they want their children also to experience the joy of having a dog as a pet or just to have a family dog like their parents.

As children, they did not have the full responsibility of caring for “their” dog. This was done by their parents resulting in giving them a trouble free experience with their dog. They then are inclined to think that when they get their own dog it will also be an effortless experience.

Many families feel that when their children are around eight to ten years old, it is time for them to own their own dog. They invariably decide on a puppy for the boy or girl with the aim of getting them to begin to take responsibility for a pet.

At eight weeks of age a puppy can already be a handful even though still tiny and cute. I have had a number of cases to deal with where parents brought home a large breed puppy as a present for their five to six year old child, only to call me for help by the time the child, being unable to control the puppy, has become afraid of the dog that has knocked him/her over and without having developed bite inhibition the puppy has drawn blood with its sharp baby teeth.

In many homes the cute puppy is allowed into every room and onto beds and soon starts messing in the house and damaging
furniture. Worse of all, the parents remember some old fashioned ways of “solving” the problem by rubbing the puppy’s nose in its mess or smacking it for destructive chewing. All this may result in an out of control puppy, which is unstable and full of stress and may lead to one that becomes shy, fearful or an aggressive, dominant dog.

Many owners state the main reason for bringing their dog for puppy training for the first time is that they “don’t listen” or are “out of control and need training.” Most of these dogs are already between four and five months old. The owners then have to start teaching the dog good habits and unlearning the bad habits of the past. This requires a lot more persistence and patience from the owner.

Puppyhood is very short and by seven or eight months of age it already has moved into adolescence when it can easily get spooked by things or become very aggressive if the puppy did not continue with the basic training received at puppy school. What must be avoided is that the puppy, by the time it reaches adulthood, is alone, unloved and condemned to a sad life in a backyard. When we take a dog into our homes, for whatever reason, we make a commitment to love, train and care for it during its relatively short life of between ten to fifteen years if we are lucky.

My notes that follow on puppy training are brief but are aimed at starting their training correctly so that the families can enjoy their puppies.
The decision to adopt a puppy is without a doubt a very exciting happening in most households. Much time is usually spent deciding on the right dog, breed, size, male or female, colour and whether from a breeder or a rescue facility and more. The family then cannot wait for the great day to arrive. They often forget that it is very important to use the waiting period to prepare for the homecoming and to read about puppy care. Puppies are brought into our world and therefore it remains our responsibility to obtain the knowledge to make this transition smooth and successful.

It is advisable to visit the puppy during the interim period to learn as much as possible from the keeper or breeder. Information about the food, feeding routine, handling and what it has been taught will help the puppy to settle quicker in its new home. It is recommended to leave the puppy with its mother and siblings for as long as possible. Usually around eight or nine weeks of age is the ideal period because they learn a lot from their mother and by playing with other puppies.

**Fetching puppy**

Plan your journey so that you will have enough time to spend with the puppy and also arrive home with ample daylight and time for the pup to explore the new surroundings.

Ideally two people should go to collect the new family member and if you have another dog bring it along so that they can make the homeward trip together. Take along a towel or soft
blanket to collect the mother’s scent and/or that of the other puppies. This will form the base of puppy’s new sleeping place and have a familiar, calming influence.

Do not be in a hurry to leave, but spend time touching, carrying and playing with your new puppy in its familiar surroundings. It helps if the puppy is a little tired before you leave and it has done its toilet. Remember to collect its medical record book and ascertain when the next inoculation, de-worming etc. is due.

Once inside the car the second person must cradle the puppy on her lap on the towel and get the pup to settle down comfortably. It is very important to have the puppy relaxed or sleep on the journey and not to fall about in the back as the vehicle travels around bends. If it is a long trip and the puppy becomes restless, it may be a good idea to stop in a safe place and play a little outside before continuing.

Arriving home

Carry the puppy to the area where you would like him to eliminate. After the trip home there is a good chance that this may happen fairly soon. Make a big fuss when it happens and play happily with the puppy. *House training is an outside activity and should start there on day one!* Once the puppy has had a good chance to discover the extent of the yard it is time to meet other members of the family, one by one, outside the home. Each one must be told to stand still and allow the puppy to have a good smell before reaching out to touch him. This also applies to other dogs that must be supervised while allowing them to smell the puppy held safely in your arms.
Inside the house

Puppy must be invited to follow you into the house, directly to the room where he is going to be fed and sleep. This room is where his toys are kept where he can play and feel safe. It should also be where he spends his short-term and even long-term confinement when his owners are absent. Ideally it should have access to the outside. It is not a good idea to allow a new puppy to explore your home the first day or two. The pup must first get used to its living and feeding area and then can be invited to other rooms one at a time. If there are areas in the home that are out of bounds to the dogs then now is the time to teach it. All members of the family must be in agreement and enforce the house rules. A suitably sized cardboard box makes an ideal bed for a young puppy. Place the towel or blanket, with the mother’s scent, inside the box and the inside a crate if you are going to use one. Plenty of chew toys to amuse the puppy should be available in its room. When the puppy shows signs of sleepiness, place it in its bed and wait for it to fall asleep before quietly leaving the room. As soon as possible the puppy must learn to sleep alone. Remember to take the puppy outside as soon as it wakes up and also the moment it has finished eating. Sniffing the ground is a sure signal to pick the puppy up and run outside to its toilet area.

Feeding

Hand feeding should have preference over bowl feeding during the first week at least. Feeding by hand has a mothering effect on the pup and teaches it that good things come from you. Kong stuffing is highly recommended because meals can be prepared in advance and Kongs are made of high quality rubber that will withstand dog chewing and they are also dishwasher
friendly. Puppies should be fed at least three times a day and new owners must learn to become “clock watchers” if they want a trouble-free puppy.

Feeding time should be training time. Let your puppy watch you prepare its food in the room and see that it comes from you. Make it sniff at the food then lift it up over the pups head to capture a “sit” before feeding.

**Settling in**

Do not take your puppy to show him off to your friends during the first few weeks. Rather invite them to come and see your puppy at home. Try to get puppy to meet men, women and children of all sizes. This is a very important exercise because a people friendly puppy is a pleasure to live with. *Dogs that do not like people do not live long!*

Also do not walk your puppy in places where adult dogs may have eliminated for fear of contracting the deadly Parvo virus. Once the pup has had its second jabs it should have sufficient immunity against Parvo. Until then, carry your puppy past places where adult dogs may have soiled.

Let your puppy get used to the car a few times before your next visit to the vet. Puppies can so easily associate the car with visits to the vet and develop car nervousness or car sickness.

Puppy training and socialization classes should start at ten weeks of age.
Bringing a puppy into your home is much like bringing a new baby into your home. It becomes your responsibility not only to look after its physical needs but also to teach good manners, socially acceptable behaviour and to set limits. However, since puppies are beautiful, playful and fun it is very often forgotten that the first year of a puppy’s life is the most important period in its entire life and the ideal opportunity to establish good habits that will be hard to break. *If it is old enough to come home it is old enough to start learning.*

We need to start young as the puppy passes through the different very set phases of development.

During the **Teething stage** from 2-4 months of age a puppy is very dependent on its owner and will come when called and will willingly stay with him or her. A proper foundation needs to be set to maintain its bond with the owners. *Getting along with the family and strangers is more important than learning to “sit” or “stay.” Dogs that do not get on with people end at rescue places!!!*

Soon nipping and chewing will get worse. Puppies do not always grow out of it and it can develop into a lifelong bad habit if the dog is not actively helped and trained to work through this period otherwise expensive clothing and furniture will suffer damage and proper **bite inhibition** that is so important will not be established. *The first rule is to look after your property and not to allow it to happen.*
As the pup moves into adolescence it becomes more independent and will not always listen when called and can get lost or stolen. This is the period for more freedom because it now is house trained and as it is allowed freedom of the house also needs supervision, supervision, supervision because it will do what is natural for a dog, jump on furniture, steal food, forget to go outside to pee, poo and will chew anything left lying around.

Puppies should not be given too much freedom during their first year. Good behaviour determines the freedom they will be allowed. Having a short leash while indoors is not a bad idea. A clear plan should exist for dealing with the pup when the owners are at home v not at home.

During the period of socialization when the dog is introduced to the world he is guided not to be afraid of anything and the following must happen:

- The puppy must meet as many men, women, children and things (vacuum cleaner etc.) as possible.
- A variety of sounds, smells and different places.
- Be protected from being bullied by older dogs. If a puppy learns to be afraid of other dogs, then in adulthood we end up with a fight/flight situation.

Proper feeding, preferably good quality, specifically designed food plus meat helps to develop a healthy, strong dog.

Not too much stress on the joints should be allowed. Serious jumping should only begin after two years of age.
Obedience classes at a puppy school are a **must**. Leadership is what a puppy needs. Treat training should only be used during the first month or two and briefly when something new is taught. Puppy must learn to “Sit” and “Stay” until given a release command, “OK” or “Play.” Gradually he must learn to ignore distractions. *Obedience rules must always be fun for a pup.*

*Your puppy’s well-being is in your hands and the very first year of his life is the most important time to set him on the right track to be a pleasure to live with and a wonderful companion to the family.*
For the first few weeks you should continue feeding your puppy with the food he was fed on. Most breeders supply a sample bag to take home with you. If you want to feed something different then introduce the new food gradually by adding half of the new food to what he has been on. Gradually phase the old food out. Try to stick to a diet that was especially formulated for your breed of dog, especially if it is a large breed dog.

There can be little doubt that the best diet for your dog is homemade food. Quality ingredients including meats and vegetables and other ingredients free of pesticides and antibiotics will have great nutritional value for your puppy or dog. However, time and money will influence many owners and for some it is not something they would like to do. In my household we aim to cook food once a month in sufficient amount to last for a while as an additive to commercial food. I regularly provide raw bones for my dogs. Never give cooked bones because of the danger that they may splinter and damage the dog’s intestines.

The first big question is to decide on canned or dry food. This is not much of a problem for small dogs who can easily be fed on either dry or canned or semi-moist foods. Large breed dogs, however, should mostly be fed on dry food in most circumstances. Dry foods have less water in a cup of food and contains more roughage. Clean drinking water must always be available close to the feeding area.
A Trained Dog is a Good Dog

I recommend **hand feeding** during the first few weeks when puppy comes home for the **mothering effect** it has in telling the puppy that **good things come from you!** Food that is not given by hand is stuffed into a **kong** and is a great way for the pup to keep itself busy while eating and you are absent.

- A common question is, “**How often should I feed my dog?**” Puppies less than **3 months** of age should be fed at least **four times a day** by hand.
- Puppies between **3 and 5 months** of age should be given **three meals a day**.
- Adult dogs can be fed once or twice a day.

It is very important that you give your puppy the best nutrition to protect its health. Choose food that will provide a balanced diet. As a rule you should buy what your dog can eat in a month in order to make sure the food has not expired. This will naturally depend on the size of the dog and the food. Dogs like routine, so establish a feeding routine and stick to it. For many a good time to feed the dog is during the family meals. This keeps the dog busy while the rest of the family is eating and stops begging at the table. However, as a general rule, my dogs get fed after I have eaten. I also prefer limited time feeding rather than free choice where food is available all day long.

**Feeding time:**

They know when their food is being prepared by the sound of their dishes being moved, the noise of the food container and the the tin opener and naturally get excited. Making use of a dinner gong is a novel way of summonsing the dogs and they react very well to the sound. Now is the time to put them into calm, waiting mode to experience/learn self control and
to build attentiveness by getting them to wait some distance away until the food is ready.

Right from the start dogs also need to learn a very important lesson, that . . . “nothing in life is free” and that they need to “earn” the food given to them. As pack leader I feed my dogs so that they know that good things come from me. Quanto first has to do a “Sit, stand, down” in any order, then has to make eye contact with me before he gets his food. Juno, “Sits, geblouts” (bark) and then makes eye contact before she gets her food. I know when she is hungry because she will bark as soon as I touch the dishes. Polo has a “watch me” ritual to complete before eating.

What is not eaten within a ten minute period is covered and served at the next meal.

**Food aggression.**

There is a big difference between food drive and food aggression. When my Shepherd puppy gobbles down his food tail wagging even if I am still touching his bowl or am holding it slightly off the ground, then I’m looking forward to a dog that will be good at tracking in Schutzhund training. However, if my puppy shows signs of possessiveness, such as trying to turn and cover the food with his body as I go nearer the dish, the hair stands up on his neck and the tail stiffens, then he is telling me to stay away and I need to take immediate action before it becomes an obsession.

Witholding the food at waist height and waiting until the dog sits calmly is a ritual that may nip serious problems in the bud.
In a multi dog household, feeding the calm dogs first should send a clear message to the food aggressive one.

Growling is a more serious warning that you or any of the other dogs may be bitten if you attempt to go nearer the food. **Professional help** is indicated.

**Never try to treat food aggression with affection in order to stop the behaviour!**
BITE INHIBITION

“Without a doubt, teaching bite inhibition is the single most important item on the educational agenda of any pup.” Dr Ian Dunbar.

Puppies don’t have thumbs, they cannot hold things, they only have a mouth for this purpose, and so biting is normal, natural, and necessary puppy behaviour. Nipping is instinctive behaviour and is how they are going to survive in the wild and how they explore their world. Play-biting is the way in which puppies learn to control the strength of their bites. Puppies that do not mouth or learn bite inhibition are more likely to cause serious damage as adults when they playfully interact with the family, visitors or other dogs.

Puppies that are allowed to use their sharp teeth to dominate their families soon learn that they can use their mouths and
teeth to get what they want. But a dog that has developed bite inhibition may get involved in many dog fights but none of his opponents will be bleeding or need veterinary help.

Teaching bite inhibition is a double process: Firstly, to inhibit the force of the bite and secondly, to reduce the frequency of puppy mouthing. Ideally these two should be taught at the same time.

**Inhibiting the Force**

We have all seen puppies in the litter and at puppy school playing a game: “I bite you—you bite me” When the bite hurts, a puppy will yelp, stop playing and so immediately teach the other one that it must not use so much force play-biting. We also need to teach our puppy that humans are “sissies,” so an “Ouch” should be sufficient but loud enough for the pup to sit up and notice. Alternatively, if the puppy continues to bite or chew on your hand, use the other hand to get a firm grip on the back of his neck and apply increasing pressure until he stops. That is the signal for you to immediately also let go. Do not hold on longer than is necessary. When the puppy backs off, stop the activity, look at the spot where he bit, pretend it to be nothing too serious, or stop the bleeding. Get the puppy to sit or lie down next to you to and wait some time before the game can continue.

If the puppy does not react to your “yelp” by continuing to bite and attack, call the puppy, “No Bad” or give a deep, growly “Bah” bark, similar to the sound the mommy dog uses to admonish her pups. Leave the room and shut the door. Alternatively, pick the pup up by the scruff of the neck and place it outside for it to realise that it has lost a playmate.
Return after a few minutes to cuddle and show that you still love your puppy, not the bites. Using the “Ouch” sound and immediately leaving the puppy for a while is a very important action to drive home the fact that you disapprove of hard bites. He soon learns that hard bites stop the fun. The use of a glove could be considered because then you do not have to pull your hand away so quickly after a hard bite. Movement around the dog’s head can encourage play biting if it goes on too long. Short daily sessions are required to inhibit strong bites.

I teach my puppies something like: “I may put my hand into your mouth but you may not do it to me.” By gently pushing a hand into the pup’s mouth I get him to chew Gently on my hand with bites that no longer hurt. Any hard bite is met with a loud “Ow!” or “Ouch!” and in so doing try to eliminate bite pressure altogether.

All this should be achieved by the time the pup is four-and-a half months old and has adult canine teeth.

**Decreasing the Frequency of Mouthing**

Each time you cuddle your puppy he instinctively will start mouthing you again. Now he must be taught that gentle mouthing is okay but he must stop when requested to do so.

Now the puppy must be taught the “leave!” and “take it” command. Offer the pup a treat and just as it wants to take it, close the treat in your fist and say “Leave!” The pup will ignore the command at first and attempt to dislodge it from your hand by nudging or licking your hand. Repeat the command until the puppy backs off then open your hand, revealing the treat and say “take it.” (Do not give the treat to the puppy but let him
Some trainers prefer to use the “Off” command rather than “Leave.”

Soon it is possible to stretch the period between leaving and taking by saying, “Good dog one, good dog two, good dog three” etc. before, “Take it.” Next the treat is placed on the ground or held in the open hand for the puppy to see it but he may not touch it for up to eight seconds without permission.

The point of this exercise is to not only distract the puppy from mouthing you but to stop doing so on command. Dogs should gradually be weaned off mouthing altogether by age six months. Regular hand feeding should continue because this involves the closeness of human hand and his mouth.

A sharp “Leave!” must be used for biting clothes, shoes, shoe laces etc. Play-fighting is allowed because there are rules he must obey and gives you control over your puppy.
SOCIALISING

When we bring dogs into our homes to share their lives with us under our rules we must socialise them to make it easy for them to adapt to our way of life. Socialisation involves exposing your puppy to a wide variety of places and situations which he may encounter at some stage in his life and arranging for him to have as many positive experiences with humans and other canines as possible, so that pleasant associations can be built up with the outside world. It also involves protecting your pup from experiences which may be traumatic and cause emotional damage. A pup that is under socialised may grow up to be afraid of a variety of things: people, dogs, noises, certain objects and new situations. As the dog matures this fear often develops into aggression as the dog attempts to protect himself from what he perceives to be a threat. Fear-aggression can make life miserable for both you and your dog and it is therefore essential to do all you can to prevent it from developing.

Socialisation never really ends but the optimum period for socialisation i.e. the time when your puppy is most receptive to new situations, is from about 3-12 weeks of age. Most of it is spent with the breeder. At this stage in a pup’s life fear is not yet a dominant emotion and he will usually view the world around him with interest and curiosity. He will accept new situations, people and other dogs far more easily at this time and all good experiences will help to build the confidence and security needed to deal with life later on.

Initial socialisation begins in the litter when the puppy learns to be a dog. Here the pup learns important canine communication
skills from interacting with his mother and siblings. For this reason pups should not leave their mothers until the age of at least 7 weeks. It is then up to us to continue our pups’ socialisation as soon as we bring them home. They now have to learn to be dogs in a human “pack.” Until your pup has had its second jabs to protect it against the deadly Parvo virus you should rather invite friends to come and see your puppy and not let him walk in areas where adult dogs have soiled. You can guard against your pup contracting diseases by carrying him when taking him out and by allowing him access to dogs that are known to be regularly vaccinated and disease-free.

If your pup is older than 12 weeks and you have not yet begun socialising him, do not despair. Although the optimum period may have passed, socialisation is by no means impossible. Dogs can continue to grow and learn their whole lives given the right opportunities, as the owners of many rescued dogs will tell you. But do start right away, as dogs tend to become less receptive to new things once they reach maturity.

**Active socialisation:**

Puppy socialisation classes are an excellent way for pups to learn to interact with other dogs. Here pups can enjoy playing freely with one another and at the same time learn the communication skills necessary for them to get on with dogs later in life. Beginners obedience classes are also a good idea, but make sure that the instructors advocate incentive training and not compulsive methods.

However, your pup needs to see other dogs more often than just once a week at his classes. It is important to take your dog to the beach or park where he has the opportunity to meet up
with other dogs on neutral territory. Choose a place where dogs are allowed to go off-lead and where the majority of fellow dog walkers appear relaxed and at ease. Avoid dogs that are leashed, as this usually indicates that their owners don’t want them around other dogs for some reason, rather allow your dog to approach and be approached by unleashed dogs. (If you are concerned that your pup may run away, keep him on a long rope, rather than a short leash.) Do not interfere when your pup is greeting another dog, but stand quietly to the side. It is important to remain calm, because if your pup senses that you are anxious he will believe that there is something to be afraid of. Many people are afraid of attacks by other dogs, but one must remember that it is very unusual for an adult dog to attack a puppy and that most fights between adult dogs are in fact triggered by interfering owners. Don’t allow your fear to deny your dog the opportunity to meet and play with a friend or even to be put in his place by a dog that wants nothing to do with him. Both will be good experiences, as a growl or snap from a tolerant older dog will teach him respect for his elders which may save him from trouble as he matures! (If necessary, ask a friend who is unafraid and who has more experience in handling dogs to accompany you on your initial outings.)

It is important to socialise pups to all sorts of humans; adults, children, babies, the elderly, men with uniforms or hats, those who are timid and those who are exuberant. Whenever I am out with my puppy and people remark about what a nice looking puppy he is, I respond with, “Thank you, would you like to pat my puppy?” To a dog, a baby may seem like a different species to an adult, while children are generally viewed with apprehension by dogs who are not brought up with them. It is also important that as pack leader you protect your pup from
those who may frighten him. Your dog should feel safe under your care and learn to trust your judgement. Sometimes it is best if the person you are introducing your pup to stands completely still and does not look at him. This gives your pup a chance to sniff and investigate the person on his own terms. One of the most threatening ways to greet dogs is to loom over them and pat them on their heads, but unfortunately it is what many people do. Encourage strangers to change their threatening posture by going down on their haunches a few feet away from your pup and slowly extending the back of their hand so that your pup is free to sniff them if he wishes. If you are not approached by people wanting to touch your pup, you will have to pluck up the courage to approach strangers and ask them to do so. Although you may get some funny looks, most people are very obliging when you explain what you are trying to achieve. (Remember to approach humans of all ages, shapes and sizes.)

Not all socialisation with regards to humans involves one-on-one interaction. Your dog needs to get used to groups of people and even crowds. Walking him regularly past a shopping centre will help with this, while allowing your pup to hear and see children in a playground will accustom him to the high pitched noises and strange movements peculiar to them. Always supervise interactions between children and your pup so that you can protect him from any cruelty and also correct him for any unwanted behaviours, such as biting limbs and tugging clothes, which children often cannot control.

**Places, objects and noises:** In order to have a well-socialised confident dog, it is important to take your pup to as many places as possible. Puppies need to enjoy life and accompany you whenever and where you go. When you go to the petrol
station or pick up the kids from school take him along for the ride. Take him inside shops where dogs are allowed and walk him along a fairly busy road (always on a lead). Allow him to become familiar with traffic noises, echoing buildings, busy sidewalks, and large parked vehicles. The world is a noisy and busy place and a pup that is never let out of the sanctuary of his home will be unlikely to enjoy venturing out as an adult. Never react to signs of fear with either comfort or punishment. Comfort will teach your pup that it is good to be afraid, while punishment will increase anxiety and exacerbate the problem. The best thing to do when your pup gets nervous is to distract him with a treat game or easy training exercise and reward him for participating.

It is important to remember that all dogs are different. Some are naturally confident and resilient, while others are shy and nervous. It may take a lot longer for some to adjust to new things and it is important to have patience. Never force your pup to go somewhere or greet someone he doesn’t want to. If you continue to build on his positive experiences and let him see that you can be trusted, his confidence should grow and he should learn to cope with more and more.
House-training is all about getting a puppy to eliminate outdoors and not to do it indoors. Decide on a small area in your yard far from the house if you have an enclosed yard. It should not be up to the dog to choose a place. If a dog is trained to only go to that area it will do so throughout its adult life.

The easiest way is to take your puppy to the area you have earmarked for this purpose as soon as you arrive at home. Owners need to make a concerted effort of taking, leading or carrying the puppy there each time and wait there for a while until the puppy eliminates. If the puppy wanders off and eliminate elsewhere, pick it up and place it in the area you want it to happen. Dogs go back to the same spot. Polo did not once mess in the house. Very young puppies need to urinate and defecate more frequently than adult dogs and are also more likely to do so as a result of fear or excitement.

It is important to understand a pup’s limitations in this area and to handle house-training in a positive manner. It is better to engage in a concentrated effort over a few weeks, at the end of which you are likely to have a fully house-trained dog, than to make sporadic attempts at house-training over several months with unreliable results.

Dogs do not naturally know to go to a door to indicate that they need to go out. Therefore, teaching a puppy where to go to the toilet takes vigilance and patience. It is important not to allow a new puppy too much freedom in the house. During the first weeks it is not unkind to restrict it to one room in the
house. If it is going to be allowed into the rest of the house then it must be watched like you would watch a child at a pool if you don’t want an accident.

Their bladders are small and they need to go more frequently. Most pups will begin to sniff the ground when they are considering urinating or defecating and may also circle a particular spot. You need to be aware of your pup’s movements and pick up on these signals quickly. It is therefore best not to let your pup out of your sight in the house at this critical stage in his learning.

Whenever your pup displays one of the signals, immediately take him outside to a suitable area and wait for him to urinate or defecate. Try to take him to the same place each time, as dogs will often go where their sense of smell indicates that they have been before. As soon as he “performs”, reward him with gentle praise. Allow him to return to the house if he so wishes, so that it is clear that you are pleased with his actions.

There are several times in the course of your pup’s daily life when he is likely to need to relieve himself. These are when he has just woken up from a nap, eaten a meal or finished a play session. Get into the habit of taking him outside on all these occasions. He must learn that the house is the living area and outside is the potty area. If you cannot watch a puppy for some time it is better to confine it to a bathroom or kitchen. You may sometimes have to wait several minutes for results and there may even be the odd occasion when he does not perform at all, but be patient—it is well worth it in the end! You need to know what he has done therefore it is important to go with him each time.
It is obvious that the more time you spend with your pup, the quicker he is going to learn. If a pup is kept outside for most of the day, the opportunities for teaching him are greatly decreased. If you carefully follow the hands-on approach described, the results are usually excellent and may be evident in just two weeks.

As vigilant as you may be, it is unlikely that you will prevent your pup from ever having an “accident” inside the house. There is likely to be a time when he slips out of your sight for a few minutes or urinates from great excitement. If you find that he has soiled inside the house without you being aware of it let it go! Do not recall him to the evidence and scold him or stick his nose in it. Punishing a puppy in this sort of situation is unfair and may result in a breakdown of the trust between you and your dog. The best way to handle the situation is to ignore the mess in front of the pup and to clean it up when he is not present.

Dogs use their sense of smell as a primary method of discovering their world. As any scent residue may induce a pup to use the same spot again, it is important to clean soiled areas thoroughly. Scrubbing with a biological detergent, followed by a rub down with some pure alcohol (surgical spirits) or baking soda should make the area seem clean to even the most discerning of doggy noses. Household products containing bleach or ammonia should be avoided as they contain compounds found in urine. If the puppy repeatedly wants to go the same spot, a box placed over it may be helpful.

The warning signs may vary but when the puppy suddenly looks distracted, stops eating or playing, starts sniffing and going round in a circle you need to act quickly. If you catch
him as he is just about to squat, say “no” firmly, but calmly, and quickly take him outside and praise him when he relieves himself there. Be careful not to react in a way that causes him to urinate from fright. If you can’t get him out in time do not become angry: this may teach him not to relieve himself in front of you, but will not prevent him from doing so inside the house.

Never punish your pup for urinating from fear or excitement. This will only exacerbate the problem. Rather avoid creating too much excitement when he is inside the house. If the pup has a secure and loving home, he should quickly outgrow this behaviour.

**Going through the Night**

Until a pup is about 12-14 weeks old (many a lot older), he is usually unable to go through the night without urinating or defecating. A good rule of the thumb is to add 1 to his age e.g. 2 months + 1 = 3 hours between trips outside. Arrangements must therefore be made to accommodate his needs. Many people find that their pups will readily go to the loo on newspaper placed on the floor, as this is the method used by most breeders before the pups are adopted. However, if this practice is kept up for too long it can interfere with the housetraining process, by encouraging the dog to relieve himself on “suitable” material inside the house rather than to go outdoors. I believe it is far better to have the pup in a large crate or box near the side of your bed. Because dogs prefer not to soil their sleeping areas, your pup will not readily go inside the box and will therefore scratch at the sides of it or whine when he wants to go to the toilet. You can then take him outside, wait for him to perform, praise him when he does and take him straight back to bed. For
the first few nights you may have to do this 2 or 3 times, but it should soon decrease to just once a night. Although you may not enjoy getting up, this is the best way to teach your pup to let you know when he needs to go out. The crate or box should only be discarded once you are sure that your pup has learned to rely on you to let him outside, otherwise he may simply find a place in your bedroom to relieve himself while you are still fast asleep. If it is not practical to use a crate or box because your dog is older and larger, you can create the same effect by using chairs or other furniture to block him into a sleeping area next to your bed. He will still have to wake you if he wants to leave the area.

Always give your pup every opportunity to relieve himself before he goes to bed at night so that he has more chance of sleeping through. It is also very important to get your pup outside as soon as he wakes up in the morning, as he will probably be desperate to relieve himself if he has lasted the whole night.

**Eliminating on Command**

It is possible to teach dogs to urinate and defecate on command. This is a most useful command and gives the owner control over the time of eliminating. I find it essential when leaving for or arriving at a show or trial. I simply say, “Go Pee” and Quanto will oblige within seconds. A lesson I learnt many years ago when Killick had to retrieve a dumbbell in a show he rushed off right past the object and to my horror eliminated first. This can be done simply by introducing an appropriate word into the house-training process. When you take your pup outside repeat some command while you are waiting for him to do his business. As soon as he does, praise him. It does not
take long for a dog to learn what he is expected to do. You can then use this command before you go to bed at night or during a stop on a long road-trip.

**Important**

- Whenever possible, leave the door open on a long hook so that your dog can take the initiative to go outside when he wishes to relieve himself. You can secure the rest of the house and puppy can get out. This works for me!
- Many dogs scratch on the door when they want to go out, but often this sound is not heard at the other end of the house. Hanging a row of little bells or something else that will make a noise when your dog touches it at “paw height” on the door often solves this problem. This works particularly well with security gates.
- Some people avoid the issue of house-training by keeping their dogs in a garage or other bare-floored room to prevent them from soiling inside the house. No good can come of this, as the dog is allowed to urinate and defecate anywhere in this area and learns to live in his own filth. A dog that is never allowed inside the house has no idea that he may not relieve himself there. Besides its ineffectiveness as a house-training method, isolating a dog is cruel and seriously detrimental to his emotional well-being and temperament.
- Owners are sometimes advised to remove their dogs’ water supply at around 5pm, so that they are less likely to urinate during the night. However, I believe that dogs should always have a fresh supply of water. This is especially important when dogs are fed on a diet
of dry pellets, which can only be properly digested when they absorb the water that the dog drinks.

- If you want your dog to relieve himself before bedtime and he has not yet learned to do so on command, taking him for a stroll and a sniff around the neighbourhood will often bring results.
- It is very important to be aware of progress being made. Is it better than last week? Yes, good!!! Not sure? Take him out more frequently! No? Repeat the methods more diligently or try a different method.
IN-CAR SICKNESS/NERVOUSNESS

Causes & Symptoms

Behaviorists believe that car sickness in dogs is predominantly stress related and not motion related. Anxiety, most often caused by the trauma experienced by a puppy when it was taken away from all that to him was safe and familiar, may be a major cause of this condition. He is suddenly taken away from his mother and litter mates and is confined in a car with new smells, noise, unfamiliar people and strange movements. Many pups become so distressed during this first car trip that they are often physically ill before they arrive at their new homes.

Typical behaviors of a dog that has a car phobia are calming signals (licking of the lips, yawning, panting or sitting/lying down) as you attempt to bring the dog near to the car and restlessness and whining once he/she is inside the car. Dogs that are severely affected may drool, vomit and even release their bowls when inside a moving vehicle.

It is important that owners understand that dogs who suffer from this type of car related nervousness have no control over it. Punishing a dog for its behaviour or for making a mess in the car will only make matters worse. However, soothing and fussing over the dog is also not a good idea as the dog may interpret this as a sign that there really is something to be worried about.
What not to do!

Instead of discussing car nervousness problems with an animal behaviourist, some owners will often first try to solve the problem by forcing the dog to submit to their will. They will either drag the dog into the car or physically pick it up and place it in the car. In the process the dog may be physically hurt and will end up feeling trapped and even more afraid. **When dogs feel trapped they often resort to biting as a means of defense.**

A further common mistake is often made when the only time a puppy is taken for a ride is when he is taken to the vet for his shots and checkups or to the grooming parlor for baths, blow drying and general plucking and manhandling by strangers. He soon learns to associate car trips with these visits and to detest riding in the car.

Desensitizing a dog to the car

Once a dog has been aroused to a state of anxiety it is not able to learn anything. In order to train the dog to willingly enter the car one therefore has to initially introduce the car in a manner that does not cause this anxiety. This process of slowly getting an animal used to something is called desensitization. It can be divided into the following steps:

1. Toss a tasty treat or favorite toy on the ground at a distance from the car where no fear reaction is usually exhibited by the dog.
2. Gradually toss the treats nearer to the car to get the dog to voluntarily move closer to it.
3. Open the car doors and repeat steps one and two.
4. Once the dog is happily and confidently walking around the car to retrieve treats off the ground, toss a treat just inside the car so that the dog just has to stick its head in to retrieve the treat.

5. Once the dog is happy to do this, toss a treat farther into the car so that the dog is required to climb in to get it. Allow the dog to get out immediately again if it wants to.

6. Once the dog is enthusiastically jumping in and out the car, you can begin to close the doors and make the dog wait for a few seconds before you let him out. At this stage it is a good idea to get into the car with the dog, as you would if you were going out. Slowly extend the time the dog is kept in the car until he can happily sit for 5 minutes without showing signs of distress. It is a good idea to keep the windows as far open as possible at this stage and to give the dog a stuffed Kong or other tasty chew to keep it occupied.

7. Once the dog is able to comfortably sit in a stationary car, it is time to switch on the engine. Leave it on for only a few seconds and then switch it off again. Slowly increase the time that you leave it on for.

8. Begin your first trip by driving round the block for no more than two minutes. Slowly increase these trips until you can make it to the beach or to another place where your dog can get out and have fun! Once the dog realizes that car trips lead to fun outings he/she should be happy to ride in the car.

**NB:** All the steps above must be taken at a pace that is suitable for the individual dog. Some dogs may get through all the steps in one day, but others with severe phobias may only be able to cope with steps one and two in their first
session. If a dog shows signs of anxiety at any stage, STOP IMMEDIATELY and go back to the previous, easier step before ending the session with the dog in a positive frame of mind.

Prevention

Quanto’s first trip in the car was spent on a comfortable lap and within half an hour of leaving his mommy he was fast asleep! He has loved car rides ever since. However, if the first encounter with a car is not handled properly, it can create lasting, negative associations. Car sickness can therefore best be prevented by getting puppies used to the family car while they are still very small and more receptive to new adventures. Begin by having someone hold the pup in the back of the car or place him in his crate if no one is available. Go for short trips around the block and no further. Talk to the pup in a happy voice so that he can focus on you and not the motion of the car. Be sure to take corners slowly so that he is not thrown about. (I’ll never forget taking young Bosun for a ride in the back of my brand new Kamper van and as I rounded the fast bend he sank his sharp puppy teeth into the seat to steady himself.) When back at home, stop and reward him inside the car for being such a good boy during the ride. Repeat this process for a few days. When the pup begins to relax, the trips can gradually be lengthened. Soon short stops can be introduced when you leave the car for a very short while and reward the pup with a very tasty treat when you return. When he is happy to stay alone in the car for a short while, it is time to take him to the vet. Fortunately these days, veterinarians and their staff are very good at spoiling puppies with treats on their regular visits. With special treats administered by the vet, the puppy can be taught not to fear the kind veterinarian and to focus on
his treats and not the injection. Killick, was the only one of my dogs that did not really enjoy being in the car. As a pup he contracted Distemper and the regular visits to the vet certainly had a negative effect on him.

**Tips for dogs that become physically ill in the car**

1. If the dog has been sick in the car then try and determine how long it was before he showed typical signs of car sickness such as drooling and swallowing down vomit. If he was fine for say 10 minutes then, instead of walking him to a park or playing field that you can reach within that time frame, drive him there! While at the park, play the usual games that he loves to play and make it so enjoyable that he will look forward to being driven there again. On the way back you should make a big fuss of him and end with tasty treats.

2. **Do not feed** the dog for at least six hours before a trip. Having an empty stomach will make him less likely to throw up. If he does, there will not be food in the vomit and it will be easier to clean up. However, while some dogs travel well on an empty stomach, others feel more comfortable on a **small meal**. Owners need to establish what works best for their dogs in this regard. Water will not upset his stomach and may make him feel more comfortable.

3. **Watch your dog** for signs of nausea (hanging the head and drooling). Stop before it is too late. Switch off the car and offer the dog some water. If he is not distressed by getting in and out of the car allow him outside for a breath of fresh air.
4. **Drive as carefully** with a carsick dog as you would with a carsick child. This applies particularly when going around bends.

5. Pets, like people, are less likely to get carsick if they are allowed to watch the passing scenery. Position the dog in such a way that he can be comfortable looking out of a window.

6. **Fresh air** is good for anyone that is feeling carsick. Wind the window down just enough for the dog to put his nose outside.

7. Try using **Rescue Remedy**. This is *Bach Flower Remedy*. It tends to calm down an animal but doesn’t make them dopey like drugs do. Give about 4 drops in the mouth about 10-12 hours before starting the trip, repeating every four hours or as needed.

8. Try giving a little **raw honey** before the car trip. It tends to calm the tummy. Repeat as necessary. (If your dog has a heart problem, however, do not give honey, as it tends to make the body retain fluid, which is not good in the case of heart patients).

9. **Ginger** is one of the best herbs for nausea. Ginger Snap cookies may help to settle the stomach.

10. For longer trips (over an hour) **consult with your vet** for the possible administration of tranquilizers to help control nervousness or a drug that is known to ward off car sickness. The age and the size of the dog need to be taken into account when medication is involved.

11. Some dogs **genuinely suffer from motion sickness** and/or a balance problem. They should only be moved in a car if it is really necessary and then with medication supplied by a veterinarian.
Teaching your dog Car Manners

An important lesson to teach your dog is how to enter and leave your vehicle when commanded to do so. Dogs that have developed the habit of jumping uninvited into your car will do so when you open the back door to fetch something. You may simply want to get your jacket and in jumps Bozo with his muddy feet! Even worse, when you stop in town to deliver something, your dog may use the opportunity to jump out and land itself in dangerous traffic. Dogs also need to learn to behave well once inside the car, as most people do not find it amusing when their dogs roll about on the upholstery or chew door handles and armrests.

To teach your dog good car manners, start with the dog on a collar and lead next to the car. Give the order to “sit” and “wait” before opening the car door. Any forward movement is checked backwards with the lead and at the same time a firm, “No, wait” is given. As soon as the dog sits still, the lead is loosened again. Stand still next to the dog, count twenty and then say, “OK” or “In” etc. Praise the dog for getting in on your command. Repeat the same exercise when you want the dog to get out. This time you use your body to block the door opening and prevent the dog from jumping out without permission. Repeat a number of times and always follow the same procedure when entering or leaving the car.

A dog that has been taught in the beginning to settle down inside the car before the car actually goes anywhere will soon develop the habit of lying down or sitting quietly during the journey. It may be necessary, in the beginning, to have someone monitoring the dog or provide it with a harness or doggy seatbelt to confine the dog’s movement inside the car.
Do not use a leash and choke chain because the dog may panic when left alone and get itself tangled up or injured.

Safety

I once observed a truck with a dog tied to the back railing stop in front of my car. As the owners disappeared into the restaurant, the dog jumped off the back of the truck only to hang suspended in mid air from a short leash. I was able to dash to his aid and undo the animal and have a serious talk to the owners. Traveling with dogs in the back of an open truck is dangerous at the best of times. If dogs cannot be trusted to remain in the truck without being tied, they should not be there at all.

While it is important to get your dog used to being left alone in the car for short periods, *never leave a dog in a locked car with windows closed in the sun*. Even with the windows rolled down on a warm day a car can warm up to temperatures of over 40C in minutes and the dog can suffocate. Always park in the shade or in an underground lot and leave more than one window open so that air can circulate. Never leave the dog for extended periods of time. Be aware that there are risks to leaving your dog alone in the car. Your dog may be stolen or your car may be stolen and the dog dumped far away from home. *Make sure that your dog has an ID tag with a number where you can be reached or is fitted with an identity microchip*. This is particularly important when traveling on holiday.
DESTRUCTIVE CHEWING

Dogs are animals and animals love to chew. This is especially true for puppies and young dogs. What they do with their teeth can be both instinctive and learnt behaviour. Thus it is perfectly normal for dogs, especially puppies, to explore their world through their noses and their mouths. They **chew to ease teething discomfort, to play, to satisfy hunger, to establish dominance, and to relieve boredom**. Chewing releases tension which builds up in the dog’s mouth and face and is often related to stress/anxiety (*e.g.* separation anxiety) or a lack of mental and physical stimulation.

However, we also need to understand that dogs have no knowledge or understanding of what humans expect from them. They must be taught all the behaviour the owner wants from them. Dogs do not do things to spite us or teach us a lesson. They do not chew your shoes or tear the washing because you left them to go to work. So, when they have problems we must realise that we did not teach the dog the correct behaviour or that something in its basic instincts or needs is not being met, i.e. food, water, exercise, social company etc.

Every family with a dog has suffered the destructiveness of their needle-sharp teeth.

I shall never forget the destruction caused by Bosun to my garden hose and the tap connectors, which I had to replace repeatedly and finally with brass fittings.
**Mouthing** of hands by young dogs is a fairly common problem. It usually starts as a playful greeting in the young dog. When he wants attention and you stroke him, he wants to hang on to your hands. With increasing strength, as he gets older, it can become very painful indeed. Therefore, it should never be allowed to happen in the first place. Smacking the dog is the wrong way to go about it and can be dangerous.

Chewing the seat cushions, demolishing a doll or tearing clothes may amuse your dog but it is something that you cannot allow and has to be corrected as soon as possible. However, I have found that by the time most owners ask for help, they have already considered having the dog “put down.” The dog is generally more than a year old and the deviant behaviour has been in existence “for a long time.” When you tell them what to do, the reply is often, “I’ve tried it, but it does not work.” That is because, in order to modify behaviour i.e. removing unwanted behaviour or teaching a new response in place of it, **requires dedicated, consistent effort from the whole family.** There are no quick fixes in deviant behaviour.

**Here are some suggestions:**

1) **Puppy-proof your home** in the same way you child-proof an area for a child.
   - Pick up rugs and mats. Remove plants and electrical leads. Shoes and chewable objects must be out of reach. Take in the washing as soon as it is dry.

2) **Say “No”** when you catch him chewing something he shouldn’t. Every young dog needs to be taught what it is allowed to do and what not! What can be bitten and what not. If the pup chews the wrong thing, he should not be smacked or shouted at, but be told firmly, “No Leave” or
“No bite” in a low growly tone. Then replace the article with a chew toy and praise him when he takes an interest in it.

3) **Confine Bozo when you cannot watch him.** A confined pet cannot chew the furniture. Place him in an area, or in a crate, where he cannot cause damage. It should not be a punishment. Make sure he has a chew toy he is allowed to bite, available.

4) **Rotate his toys.** Give him one or two chew toys at a time and change them every few days so that he can remain interested in them. Do not leave a tennis ball as a chew toy. Research seems to indicate that the saliva of a dog and the glue of a tennis ball produce a substance that will be harmful to the enamel of the dog’s teeth.

5) **Make chew toys interesting.** Ensure your dog’s interest in what he is allowed to chew by dragging it on a string or coating it in peanut butter. Soaking it in some broth or rubbing your scent all over it may help

6) **Apply bad scents.** Most pets dislike the smell of perfumes and colognes. Mix one part perfume with ten parts water and spray the solution on what the pet shouldn’t chew. Hot pepper sauce will discourage him from chewing some items. Tabasco sauce can be wiped on furniture and other non-chewables. Try a test spot first to ensure that it won’t stain your belongings.

7) **Obedience train your dog.** Young and immature dogs need regular daily obedience training. Join a club and learn the basics that are required to make your dog a friendly well-mannered dog that is a pleasure to live with. Enrol your dog in agility training classes. It builds co-ordination, confidence and is fun.
8) **Hide shoes.** Objects like shoes have your scent on them and when you are away and your pet misses you he will be comforted by them. Before you leave home rub your scent all over your dog and the toys you are leaving for him.

9) **Punishment after the act must be avoided.** Dogs have a very short memory and will not connect your anger with the misbehaviour, unless you catch your pet in the act. Never scold your pet when he comes to you, no matter what he did.

What to do with an older dog that was allowed to develop bad habits for some time can be a more difficult exercise. Much will depend on the dog, the breed and the nature of the dog’s basic problem. At age two most dogs will have stopped being destructive. The garden hose, washing and the plants will generally be left alone. It must be remembered that, “**Dogs do what works for them.**” If they have been allowed to get away with it, they will continue to do so. Now stronger methods will be required and it will take longer to correct. Discuss individual cases with the trainer at your club for further advice. The use of **Down Dog Spray,** a non toxic bitter spray, can be very effective in cases where you can catch him in action.
Jumping up is possibly the most common complaint of dog owners.

Human greeting culture consists of shaking hands or bowing. Dogs on the other hand lick and sniff each other and jump up as a submissive greeting. Puppies jump up and lick the corners of adult dog’s mouths to get them to regurgitate food for them to eat.

This jumping up is retained when they join their human pack where, at first, it is regarded as “cute” until it becomes annoying, hurts or spoils our clothes. We allow it when they are small and resent it when they grow up.

When you have been away your pup wants to lick your face as part of his submissive greeting and to show his happiness at your return. He does not know that his nails are scratching you or that his paws are muddy. You taught him to come when called, so do not discourage him by getting angry or hurt him by stepping on his toes or hitting him. It is not his fault that our form of greeting differs from his. Remember also that the dog has a very strong compulsion to jump up and that it is hard to un-train.

Dogs do not know the difference between positive and negative attention. When you push him away or scold him, you are giving attention to his behaviour and that is what the puppy wants! The best way is to ignore it, turn away and give a command like, “Sit” before playing with your puppy. When
a dog wants another dog to leave him alone, he turns his head away and walks away. So, turn your back and walk away.

Dogs have a difficulty in generalising. When visitors arrive the puppy will again want to jump up to greet them even though he knows not to do it with you. It is a good idea to tell your friends the procedure before meeting your pup. When meeting strangers it is better to have your puppy on a leash so that you have control and can prevent him from jumping up.

**The following suggestions may help you to prevent or break this bad habit:**

1) **Don’t let him start.** Best time to prevent jumping up from getting started is not to encourage it when he is a cute little puppy. When the puppy first starts jumping up gently push him down and say “**Off!**” or “**Ah! Ah!**” as soon as his paws leave the ground.

2) **Kneel when he comes running** to you. Let him come close to your face and even lick it. Pet him, tell him you love him in a gentle kind voice and scratch behind his ear. When the greeting is over, stand up, say “Good dog” and leave.

3) **Step back.** When your dog gets ready to jump up, take a couple of quick steps back—just enough for him to miss you completely—and say “No” or “Sit!” Pat your chest as if you are inviting him to jump up and be ready to step back at the next jump up. When he refuses to jump up, praise profusely.

4) **Step forward.** Just as he is ready to jump, take one or two quick steps forward, tell him, “Off” or “Sit!” Dogs do not like to be rushed or pushed backwards when they attempt to jump.
5) **Hand him off.** When next he comes to jump up, spread the fingers of your hand wide and quickly push your open palm at, but not touching, his face. Dogs don’t like hands coming into their face and will soon back off.

6) **Raise your knee** so that it is at the level of his chest before he jumps. Be ready to prevent the jump. Pat your chest and invite a repeat. When the dog decides “No, way” and refuses to jump, it is time to praise because he did the thinking, not you. *The method of knocking the dog down by hitting him in the chest with the knee does not work because the handler does all the work. The dog must make the decision not to jump.*

7) **“Down Dog,”** is a non-toxic, weak solution of bitter-tasting spray in a small pump bottle spray used to train the dog kindly not to jump on you. Usually only one or two set-ups and squirts are required to make the dog well mannered. The unpleasant taste must be associated by the dog as caused by his own action.

8) Dog **Training Disks** can very effectively pre-condition a dog to stop behaviour such as jumping up. These brass disks, designed by John Fisher, creates a unique sound and can be carried and put down without making a sound so that they can be used at exactly the right moment to interrupt unwanted behaviour. *The Training Disks are best used by an experienced dog trainer who can then demonstrate and instruct the owner.*

9) **Join a club** and teach your dog the **sit** and **stay** command as the best ways to help control jumping up. Once the dog’s **Sit—Stay** is reliable he is taught to greet visitors in that position. Afterwards they can go out the back door and come back in through the front
door many times and give the dog much needed extra practice.

10) **Generalising is a dog-learning problem**. Dogs may learn quickly not to jump up *today* but what about tomorrow? Will he *not* jump up on another visitor? Not likely?! You will have to be patient and *practise repeatedly* by setting up 5 to 10 repetitions with different people over a period of time until the problem is cured. Fortunately future trials will be quicker.
Puppy social play behaviour starts soon after the puppies are able to move about which is as early as three weeks of age. They use play to develop the survival skills they will need as adult dogs. These inborn behaviour patterns can be seen in all puppies—they want to chase, play-bite, bark, track and retrieve. They also play competitive games of rough-and-tumble and tug-of-war. This is how dominance is developed. The winner gets the prize and carries it away. Even without playmates or toys a puppy will chase its tail and pounce on imaginary objects.

Once a puppy has joined our human “pack” we need to build a sound relationship with our puppy and make use of puppy play activities to strengthen this bond. Through games we can satisfy a dog’s prey drive. I have started all my puppies playing ball first thing each morning after our bonding session. Rolling a ball and bouncing it in the kitchen where it can be controlled, works best for me. Playing outside has too many distractions and stoppages.

Play is not only fun for you and your puppy but it teaches some very important lessons to both. While playing, puppies learn about what is allowed and what not. They discover the capabilities of their own bodies and how to interact with humans and other animals. **Nothing is more important than playing with your puppy and your dogs!!!**

Always start using toys that are the right size for your dog. A small or medium sized Kong is ideal for a puppy to investigate
and find food rewards and he will soon be able to pick it up and throw it about. Puppies should be encouraged to carry items from a very young age to help in retrieve exercises later. A variety of toys consisting of different materials as found in most pet shops should be available.

Hide-and-seek is one of my favorite games. As soon as my puppy is distracted, I hide behind a tree, around a corner, under something, on the beach behind a rock or sand dune and wait for my puppy to search and find me. This all dogs have enjoyed and it teaches them to always keep an eye on its owner. This prevents dogs from getting lost or stolen.

Most dog trainers warn against playing tug-games with young dogs. One must be very careful while they are teething not to hurt their mouths. However, the concern seems to be in that if the dog is allowed to win in tug-games they may have a pre-disposition to dominance and aggressive behaviour. Tug-games should have rules otherwise it can become a power struggle. Dogs should be taught to let go of the object on command.

I prefer to play tug with a ball on a string. Dogs move five times faster than humans so to avoid being bitten, hold onto the string. This may not always help especially where puppies or young dogs are inclined to leap up to get at the ball. The mistake most owners make when they want the dog to release an object is that they get hold of the object in the dog’s mouth and while telling the dog to leave they are pulling at the same time. This creates tension in the dog’s mouth and the game continues and becomes worse. Rather play “dead mouse” by holding your hand under the dog’s jaw and giving a command,
“Give” or “Leave” and wait for the dog to drop it in your hand for praise. Swopping it for a treat is easier in a small puppy.

Do not allow possessiveness over toys. All toys are your toys and must be accounted for at the end of the game when it goes back into your pocket or toy box. I regularly have a roll call at the end of a play session or walk and demand, “Where is the ball?” and my dogs rush off to search for it because we cannot leave before I have the ball. Do not leave toys lying around. Toys left with dogs will be destroyed. Quanto’s favourite ball on a string is more than five years old.

Games involving young children and dogs must always be supervised to avoid allowing the game to get out of hand. Children need to learn how to administer a treat to a puppy by placing the treat on an open palm and not between the fingers. A nice game is for a child in a group to call the puppy and reward it with a treat when it comes. Then the next child calls the puppy and so on. This teaches the puppy to respond to its name and to come when called. The next time the format changes slightly and puppy first has to sit or down before earning a treat.

Playtime should be scheduled after the early morning walk or run at the play park.
“COME”
Basic command training steps.

Training rule: Never correct your dog after calling him to you!

If he deserves a correction, go to him and then give the correction. “Stop doing what you are doing!”

Step 1 Teaching the meaning of “Come” with food:

The aim here is for an immediate response from the dog and at the same time to make it a pleasurable experience for him. At home, on walks etc. always have food handy to reward your dog when he comes to you; make a big fuss, “Good come”, and “Good dog”.

In an enclosed area two or more family members can take turns calling the pup (or untrained dog) back and forth. Sit or bend down when you call the dog.

It is important that the dog associates the word “Come” with something good such as food or hugs. Dogs soon learn that when they respond to “Come” a leash is attached to them and their freedom ends, so they become reluctant to come to the owner. So, call the dog, praise, hug and treat and send him to play some more before you call again. When the puppy or dog comes perfectly every time, the food treats or tug games are gradually reduced to about half the time. Treats are now reserved for the best efforts. When he starts reacting consistently to the word, “Come”, we go on to the next step.
**Step 2 Back up on “Come” command:**

We make use of the natural instinct of the young dog to follow moving objects. Wait for him to become distracted. Call him and then run backwards while you continue to call “Come, come, come.” and treat, “Good dog” etc.

* **NO SITTING:** We want him to come in fast. That is why we back up! Sit will only slow him down.

* **NO CORRECTIONS:** If he does not come do not correct him. *Teach him that failure to comply ends the fun you are having.* You must be very sure that he knows the “Come” command before you correct him. A correction—a sharp “pop” and release—is something that signals to the dog that he must stop doing what he is doing. Punishment like yanking the chain on the dog without a warning to give the dog a chance to avoid the correction will only negatively influence the willingness of the dog to work at all. People who rely on punishment to train their dogs take months if not years longer to teach the same thing. Withdrawing your love, even for a short while should be enough punishment for your dog.* **FOOD** must only be given when you call him and he comes to you. Gradually phase out food by only rewarding the best efforts.

The word “SIT” can be introduced when the dog enjoys the game.

Try to practise these exercises in at least three or four different locations.
Step 3 Formal “Come” training:

Give a “Sit St-a-ay” command. Move to 3-4 paces in front of the dog. Call, “Come” followed by an automatic pop on the leash, and back-up (i.e. run backwards). Food and enthusiastic praise must be given when he gets to you. Make very sure that the “pop” is given immediately after the “come” command i.e. before he comes to you.

The dog will try to beat the automatic pop and jump forward towards you.

Step 4 Eliminate back-ups when you have good speed:

The reason for speed in coming is to eliminate distractions on the way. When good speed is achieved discontinue back-ups and add, “Sit” when he is a few paces from you. Make the sit period very short. Lots of praise must be given for good speed.

If you see the dog slowing down, continue with back-ups again. I use a ball on a string to get Quanto to come to me with speed. When he is quite close to me I throw the ball through between my legs and he passes between my legs in a hurry to get to the ball. Repeat until your dog rushes at you when you say, “Come.”

Step 5: Add distractions.

Now distractions are very important. Think of distractions that you may add e.g.: Give a good “Stay”, then:

1. Noise before “Come” call, e.g. someone claps hands.
2. Move about before calling the dog.
3 Talking to the dog,” Are you ready?” Make him excited to rush forward.
4 A distracter rolls a ball, shows the dog the tug toy or that he has liver treats etc. The dog must learn that the only way to get these rewards is to obey the handler.

Obedience classes provide the best distractions because of all the dogs and handlers nearby.

If the dog anticipates the command by coming before being called, do not charge him but say, “No,” reel him in and gently “reverse” him to the starting position. In the very beginning it may be better to just ignore the dog and teach him that coming before being called has no rewards.

**Step 6 Random recall with long line. Discontinue food:**

Continue the exercise as before but now let him drag the long line. Never let the dog drag the long line unattended. It may be caught in places that could harm him.

Let him wander around for a while. Get hold of the line before calling him. Pop or reel him in if necessary. The secret is to make the pop quite “sharp” and the dog will immediately rush to you for enthusiastic praise and reward.

Do not go off leash too soon. Most beginners make the mistake of going off-leash before the dog listens to their voices.

**Step 7 Off leash:**

When he consistently performs on the long line it is time to go off leash.
Give a “Down stay” and practise random recalls. Place obstacles in the way for him to go around. E.g. a box, chairs, another dog lying in the way, and move around a corner . . . . etc.

*Learn to read your dog. Watch him very closely and try to avoid mistakes. Always first consider if the mistake made by the dog is not your fault. Maybe you missed something.*

**If the dog makes mistakes go back to on-leash work.**

What is important is to realise that if I am responsible for teaching my dog to “come”, it is my job to convince my dog that he must come every time I call him. If the dog realises that he need only come after a few calls or when your voice sounds angry enough he is never going to be reliable. Also never give a command that you cannot enforce, until you are confident that he will respond immediately no matter what is happening around him.

*Your dog should now be ready for more advanced work and should make you proud of him.*

**AREA of INFLUANCE**

Dogs know that when they are 5 paces away from the handler, “*You can’t catch me!*”

Nearer than that they can feel the presence of the trainer and will most likely come when called. That is why it is important to know the limits of your area of influence over your dog.
Older dogs and some Rescue dogs that have not been trained as puppies to come when called and/or have been running free for some time may need a different approach to getting them to come on command. They need to understand that they cannot escape the handler and avoid a correction. At the same time the handler’s area of influence is increased.

Several different lengths of light nylon line must be used. A shorter 1.5m line should at first be worn anytime the dog is with the handler, including eating, playing, riding in the car, training etc. The dog must become very aware of the fact that the handler has control of him at all times. The longer lines must be used when the dog is beginning to move further away. The idea is for the handler to be able to get to the line if the dog wants to escape. The handler can step onto the line and instantly halt the disobedience.

What is very important is that the dog must not be called unless it is wearing the line. A verbal command must always be given first so that the dog learns to connect the handler’s call and the correction that will follow if it refuses to obey immediately and be aware that it cannot escape the correction.
CLICKER TRAINING

A clicker is a cricket-sounding toy used by many dog trainers. It produces a neutral sound and is ideal to accurately “mark” a dog’s behaviour. Without a clicker your, “Yes” response, although not as accurate as a clicker, will also become a marker. In some of the articles C+T is used to indicate when a clicker could be used.

For many years dog trainers have been searching for a non-coercive training method for pet owners. Although B.F. Skinner in the 1960’s first suggested using clickers with dogs, some of his students had actually experimented with clickers in the 1940’s before using it in marine mammal training. However, it is claimed that clicker training really only began in 1987 and gained momentum from 1992 onwards.

The essence of Clicker Training i.e. Click and Treat (C+T) is that the dog is guided, not forced, into the desired behaviour. Instead of pushing the dog’s hindquarters down to get him to sit, the clicker trainer will now pass a treat over the dog’s nose and eyes which will invariably get the dog to naturally want to sit down. The moment his butt touches the ground, the trainer will Click and then Treat. The Click is the short way of saying “good dog” and tells the dog exactly what behaviour is being rewarded.

If the dog already knows the sit command, the trainer will first say, “Sit” and then clicks as soon as the dog sits followed by the treat.
The dog actually works for the **treat** (Primary reinforcer which can be food, ball, affection, play etc.) The **click** (Secondary reinforcer) is the signal that tells the dog that you are pleased with what he has done and that he is going to be rewarded for it.

The clicker as a tool, when used correctly, will not only teach new behaviours very easily, but the dog becomes an active player in the learning process. If the food is not forthcoming, the clicker-wise dog will try something else instead of sitting quietly waiting for the trainer to respond.

The click means three things:

1. You have **correctly done** what I wanted you to do.
2. The click signals the **end** of the exercise. You can do what you like **after** the click.
3. You **definitely** will get your treat even if I clicked by mistake.

Before introducing the clicker to the dog, click the clicker in another room, in your pocket or behind your back to make sure that the dog does not react fearfully to it.

If the dog is not afraid of it then start making the association between the click and the treat $C+T$.

The **treat** should be something small that the dog can gulp down without chewing.

**Start by creating an association between the Click and the Treat.**
Place a treat in your closed hand and hold it a short distance from the dog’s nose. As soon as the dog reaches forward to sniff your hand, be ready to click the moment his nose touches your hand. C+T Repeat this process a few times. C+T every time he touches your left hand. Repeat a few more times.

Now move your left hand further away and to the left or right of the dog’s nose also higher or lower so that he has to reach to touch your hand.

Once the dog has mastered this, make it more difficult by letting him touch your hand while it is moving continuously in front of him.

The next step will require him to touch your hand twice or three times before you C+T.

For a very good reaction from the dog you let him win the jackpot i.e. you give all the treats in your hand.
Heeling With acknowledgement to Paul Anderson.UK.

Aim: To teach the dog to follow your left hand. C/T = Click and Treat

Equipment: Tasty food in the left hand and Clicker in the right hand.

Instead of the Clicker you can say, “Yes” and treat.

Dog sitting in front

1.1 Present your left fist, which is holding a single tasty treat, to the dog and let him touch your hand with his nose. Click, open your hand and treat the dog. Good Girl/Boy!” Repeat 8-10 times each day until you get a nice strong touch.

1.2 Do not always reward the first touch, but let the dog touch your hand a second and later even a third time before you C/T.

1.3 Next the dog must reach to touch your hand that is moved low to your left, to your right, between the legs, behind and all around you before you C/T. Let the dog move close to you between the legs and give a nice touch before rewarding.
1.4 Lift the **left** hand to a height **above the dog’s head** so that he can learn to move under your hand. Next move your arm about in a large circle to let the dog follow and touch your hand that is **held to your left and away from your body**.

*For a very good touch he earns a “jackpot” i.e. all the food in your hand.*

**Treat changes to the Right Hand**

2.1 Move the tidbit to your **right hand** and show the **empty left** hand to the dog. The dog sees the food in the right hand and may want to jump up to get it. Raise your hand to avoid this. *Jumping up is not a solution*. The dog must continue to touch you **left hand** in order to get the reward kept in the right hand. Present your left hand to him and **C/T** when his nose touches your left hand. “Good Girl/Boy!”

2.2 Reward only at random and multiple touches of the **left hand**. When the dog touches the left hand consistently we start heel exercises on the move.

**Heeling on the move**

3.1 Transfer the food back to the **left hand** to make it easier for the dog to learn to **heel on the move**. While standing, hold your left hand above the dog’s head and lead him in circles to the right and left. Reward as before. The dog is still away from your body and not yet in the close Heel position.
3.2 With the food in your **left hand**, move it past the dog’s nose and start walking away from him in a **straight** line. The dog will follow you and will attempt to touch the left hand which is held to your left at a convenient height for the dog to touch. After a good touch C/T. *Continue this exercise for a week or two while walking about.*

3.3 Now again transfer the food to your **right hand** as before and reward as soon as the left hand is touched. *Pretty soon you will find that you not only control the dog’s head, but that he will willingly walk next to you and at your pace.*

3.4 As a variation to the exercise, you can sometimes throw the tidbit forward to get the dog used to the idea of moving ahead at a fast pace.

*If, during the initial heeling, the dog moves out of position, you stop, say “Uh, uh” and there is no reward. Do praise enthusiastically whenever he is in the correct heeling position on your left hand side!* 

When the dog works really well, then and only then, do you begin to work closely.
Puppies and untrained dogs:

**Aim:** To teach your dog: 1) to pay attention and look at you. 2) To come when called.

**Equipment:** Clicker/treat/tug toy. **Code:** C/T = Click and Treat (See article “Clicker”)

1) **Getting Attention:**

Getting a dog’s full attention on command can be very difficult. If a dog does not pay attention to you, you cannot teach it anything. Start by selecting a distraction free area at home such as a spare room, a passage, the stoep, garage or a quiet area in the back yard. I prefer the kitchen where I have started the training of all my puppies. Young dogs are easily distracted and if you train in an area where the dog gets distracted and it becomes necessary to repeatedly correct the dog for lack of attention, it soon begins to associate training with “pops” on the leash, becomes stressed and starts giving calming signals such as yawning, smelling or licking of the lips.

We start off by teaching the dog that **his name** means ‘pay attention.’ *When I call, “Juno” or “Quanto,” they must look at me and make eye contact.* With a tasty treat in your hand you call your dog’s name and when you see those brown eyes looking up at you, you say, “Yes” or Click and give him the treat, holding it near your face so that the dog looks up at your face. Repeat often! If the dog is easily distracted it is better, in
the beginning, to wait patiently until the dog decides to look at you and then reward him immediately for doing so. He will then often begin to look at your face in case there is a reward for doing so. You could also “fetch” the nose by passing a tasty treat past his nose and then “draw” it up to your face. Or you can clap your hands and say, “Hey I’m calling you!” and reward him when he pays attention. Never use the dog’s name or “come” with something that will be unpleasant for the dog.

“Baby talk” your dog in a happy voice and “Yes” or C/T him for looking at your face and making eye contact. “What a good dog!” “You are so clever!” etc. Then treat or play “Tuggy.” This must be done with lots and lots of repetition during the first weeks.

The “Tuggy” game is the reward for making eye contact or coming to you. Later it gradually replaces the food reward. “Tuggy” lasts only for 5-6 seconds when the dog hangs on to the tug and you try to shake him off with sideways movements. (Up and down movements can damage the neck of a puppy).

1) The dog must know that there is a great reward for coming to you i.e. a treat and/or to play, “Tuggy.”

2) The dog must play “tug” on command e.g. “Get it.” or “Paken” (German). The tug is held between the fists and the dog must take hold of the tug between your hands and try hard to take it away. Remember that you are in command. Without you there is no game! The tug is your toy and you allow the dog to play with it as a reward for paying attention. Since it is not one of the dog’s toys, it is
never left with the dog and he must look forward to being rewarded with it.

3) A release command: “Thank you”, “Leave it”, “Give” or “Aus” (German) etc. must be given to stop the game. The dog must continue to maintain eye contact and await the next command.

4) To end a session, the command “Free”, “OK”, “Off you go”, “Take a break” etc. is used and the dog is free to do what it wants to do.

Continue to play this game until you can’t shake the dog off and he continues to make eye contact.

Now, when you have taken the tug away from the dog, turn away from him and become a “statue.” When the dog comes round to your front, say, “Yes” or C/T and play “tug-tug-tug”.

Gradually make it a bit harder for the dog by continuing to turn left or right.

Initially reward him for coming to your front even if he is not straight. Gradually the demands can be upgraded and the C/T or Tug is only given if his approach is from straight in front of you.

Aim: When the dog hears its name it must race back to you and make eye contact.
2) **Come:** Start training in a quiet, distraction free area like a garden lawn.

Ask a helper to hold your dog because he does not yet know the stay command.

Let your dog smell the food/treat in your hand and then run away a short distance, sit down and call your dog by his name. Your puppy/dog is by now straining against the leash in order to get to you. When he hears his name and “come” and is released, he happily rushes to you and is **rewarded with plenty of food and enthusiastic hugs.** Don’t be stingy! Reward your dog well for coming to you and he will soon come whenever he is called no matter the distraction.

*This exercise is repeated a number of times during the following weeks over gradually increasing distances until the dog willingly run to you at fast speed whenever he hears his name being called. This exercise tells the dog, “**What you have done is good, so do it again.**”*

My own dogs come running to me on walks when they see me sitting down.

Remember not to feed the dog before training so that he is suitably hungry. Vienna sausages broken into tiny bit usually works well for even the most fastidious.

*If the dog is easily distracted or is inclined to run away, attach a long line to the dog.*

Do **NOT** call the dog unless you have the end of the line in your hands! Now call the dog’s name, “Juno, Come” and
immediately afterwards tug him/her gently towards you with repeated “pops” in your direction, if necessary. The dog needs to understand that when you call he is going to have to come to you willingly or by force whether he wants to or not.

Beginner trainers often make the mistake of letting the dog off the line too soon. **You should not let a dog go free outside your property until it listens to your voice! Make the reward for coming to you worthwhile!****

Allow the dog to become distracted while dragging the long line. Get hold of the end of the line before calling him so that you are ready, when he hesitates, to convince him that he has to come to you when called.

*Do not call the dog in the beginning when he is busy scratching or relieving himself and is not likely to respond to you.*

*When out walking with my dogs I hide from them as soon as they are distracted by something. I hide behind the nearest tree or rock or behind a wall and they come searching for me. As a result the dogs will not let me out of their sight. They are constantly checking to see what I am doing and it is now fun and a pleasure to go walking with them.*

In the **Second** phase the food is **hidden** in the fist and the dog must still pay attention although it cannot actually see the food while the exercise is being repeated. **Thirdly** the food is seen for a short while, then it disappears in the hand and after that it stays in the pocket or carry bag. **It is important that the dog learns that it will always be rewarded for paying attention and will do so willingly. This reward need not always be food! In fact, as soon as the dog can perform a command sequence**
willingly and reliably, the **food treat must be phased out.** If this is not done by the 8th successful attempt, the dog may develop the attitude of not co-operating when he knows that you do not have food on your person. At this stage the food reward should be replaced by a toy such as a ball on a string.

The above exercises form the basis of all dog training:

**Response to name—attitude—motivation—attention.**
PUPPY RECALL

Puppies must be taught that coming to you is fun. Hold a treat level with the dog’s nose, call the dog’s name and then run backwards. This is a very popular, foundation exercise.

With puppies start by sitting on the ground with your legs spread out to form a “V.” Offer a treat and use your legs to guide the puppy into the right position very close to your face. *I teach my dogs to take food from my lips.*

For larger puppies you can kneel down sitting on your heels or use a small stool. At home a chair would do for most dogs. I find that by leaning my back against a wall and spreading my legs forward I can create the same position for a correct *present* for larger breed dogs.

**Fast Return**

A helper is needed to teach this exercise. He must hold the young dog or puppy by the collar while you position yourself in front of the dog; allow it to sniff on a treat before moving away quite quickly to a distance of about ten paces. Lower your body or sit in a submissive posture and call in a happy and exciting voice. As soon as the dog reacts to your call and starts pulling forward and is excited, the helper holds on for a second or two before releasing the dog. Keep calling all the way to you, hug and give a “jackpot” reward for a fast return. Do not demand a Sit or Present.
The helper now fetches the dog back to the start and the exercise is repeated four more times. If the helper is a family member or well known by the dog, the game can change by calling the dog back to him and taking turns in being the caller.

Quick sprints between handler and helper create lots of fun.

When a dog is able to do a Sit Stay and reacts to a toy, the same speed exercise is done but now, standing with your legs slightly further apart, call and just as the dog is about to reach you, throw the ball through between your legs for the dog to continue with speed searching for the toy or ball.

I also find that doing the recall with the dog running downhill towards you encourages a speed
PART TWO

Problems
CONTENTS

Introduction........................................................................................................79
1. Barking........................................................................................................81
2. Digging........................................................................................................94
3. Cats & Dogs.................................................................................................99
4. Coprophagia (Stool Eating).......................................................................104
5. Separation Anxiety.....................................................................................107
6. House-Training..........................................................................................115
7. Shy/Fearful Dogs.......................................................................................122
8. Resource Guarding.....................................................................................131
9. Fighting......................................................................................................135
10. Boundary Runners.....................................................................................142
11. Dogs Escaping From The Yard..............................................................145
12. Bitches In Season....................................................................................148
13. Sound Sensitive Dogs..............................................................................151
14. “Rescued” Dogs......................................................................................153
15. Adding A Dog...........................................................................................164
16. Pulling On The Leash...............................................................................171
17. Fireworks..................................................................................................176
18. How To Break Up A Dog Fight..............................................................178
19. Nervous Aggression..................................................................................181
20. Teaching Your Dog To Swim.................................................................184
21. When Baby Comes Home.................................187
22. What To Do When Attacked By A Dog..............189
23. Hyper, Overactive Dogs.................................193
24. Muzzles......................................................197
25. Chasers: Cars, Bicycles, Joggers.....................200
26. Control Over Your Dog....................................204
27. On-Leash Aggression.....................................208
Most of the problems dog trainers have to deal with are due to bad habits that were “allowed” to develop. Dogs react to what stimulates them and what they benefit from in what is typical dog behaviour. They bark, dig, chew, chase and jump on you. They do not automatically know how their humans want them to behave.

Dogs do not stare at fridges because fridges do not give them food. Dogs do not bark at post-boxes, but dogs bark at postmen because they score a psychological victory every time they bark because he immediately leaves. That is how bad habits are formed!

If a dog repeats a behaviour more than twice it is already a habit—barking, jumping up, escaping from the yard, running along the boundary wall barking or getting into the trash can.

What needs to be done in solving many of the problem behaviours is not only to stop them from continuing any longer but to replace them with good habits. The golden rule is, “Don’t let it happen in the first place, but once it has happened, start by protecting your property!” “Protect your property!” Shut the door and let the dog forget about what is inside. Take charge and create new good habits that are hard to break by being insistent and patient. Dogs are wonderful creatures. If you change your leadership today the dogs will immediately accept it.
To say, “No” to a dog teaches him nothing because he has no idea what he should have done instead. The tone of your voice may be a clear indication that you are unhappy and the dog may get a guilty look but without teaching him what you want him to do; he is likely to repeat that behaviour.

The problems that follow are some of those that occur in many households. A number of different solutions are offered in each case. What is needed is that the handler give them some thought and persist before deciding that a particular solution does not work. If you have told your dog to “Leave” something alone you need to be sure that he understands the meaning of the word. If you tell him to “Sit” when you open the car door, he needs to know that Sit means that he cannot jump in until given permission.
The problem with barking is that while it is very normal canine behaviour it is often very difficult to work out exactly why a dog barks. A dog may bark when he senses a strange dog nearby, or when he hears unusual noises. He is also expected to bark at strangers approaching your home to warn you, especially at night. **Barking at inconvenient times and for too long causes most problems**. Pet owners also never hear their own dogs, but the neighbours sure will. A little is okay, but the problem is when he does not know when to stop even when told to do so. Barking is often made worse because owners are inconsistent in the way they deal with it. Sometimes the dog is allowed to bark, even encouraged to bark and then at other times scolded or beaten for barking. This can be very confusing and stressful for a dog. No wonder some bark more when the owners are away.

Before you can start on a method to **reduce** the amount of barking, **you need to understand why the dog is barking**. Is he lonely? Does he bark at people, birds or dogs? Does he bark when you are away? Is it **separation anxiety**? (See my notes under **Problems**). You need to know what sets him off in order to be able to stop the barking. When he first starts barking, go and **investigate the reason** for his behaviour. By listening to the various tones of his barks, you will be able to tell when he is barking at the other dogs and asking them to play or when there is someone at the gate or he is barking at a bird or is frightened or bored. You will then be able to take action. Dogs
each have a distinctive bark and you can quite easily tell which one is barking.

**Three or four rapid barks with pauses in between:** “Come, there is something we need to check out.” **Rapid barking at midrange pitch:** “Stranger entering territory.” **Continuous barking at a slower pace and lower pitch:** “There is an immediate threat.” **Bark-pause-bark-pause-bark-pause for long period:** “I’m lonely” **Bark, bark:** “Hi.” **Woof:** Single purposeful bark: “Let me in/out.” or “Supper time.” or “Leave me alone” **Continuous high pitch barking:** “Bird get off the roof.” or “Yippee we’re going.” Unfortunately, although dogs learn the right barks from their mothers, they are also quite good at copying **nuisance barks** from other dogs. So, don’t let it happen!

**Let’s look more closely at some reasons why your dog may be barking:**

**A dog’s hearing is so acute** that it can hear a grasshopper chewing or a chip fall on a carpet. So you can have another dog barking three blocks away from your house and while you cannot hear it, Bozo will have no problem picking it up and replying to him and inviting him to come and play. Some breeds such as Terriers, Dobermans, Dachshunds, Spaniels, Shelties and Toy dogs are very prone to this condition.

**Dogs bark to call the rest of the pack to defend the den** The higher ranking animals should then take over. You may have seen your dog barking at the gate and occasionally looking over his shoulder to see if you are coming. He is merely the “alarm-giver” who wants to warn you of a possible danger and expects you to come and help. Barking is a call for back-up.
Your duty then, in the beginning, is to go out every time Bozo barks, day or night, and make sure that the coast is clear. Thank Bozo calmly for the warning, take him into the house and make him sit before rewarding him with a treat and a hug. If this routine is followed consistently, Bozo will soon begin to develop the ability to decide on the need for giving alarm. He will learn to control his barking and not go on and on. You will also learn not to shout at your dog! Remember also that some dogs, like the German Shepherds, take their protective duties very seriously and just don’t know when to shut up. It is part of their makeup, so set limit and start training early.

You may find that your dog does not stop barking when you arrive. This could be because the dog does not regard you as “his leader” and the dog-owner relationship may need attention. On the other hand the dog may only stop barking when you are on your way to belt him. He looks at you and since he is not barking any more has no clue why he is unpopular and why you do not love him like before. This may make him lonelier and cause him to bark even more than before. Also, as far as your dog is concerned “Shut up” may mean “Go for it!”, so it is best not to raise your voice and rather use “Quiet” or “Shush” without yelling. Speaking softly to your dog teaches him to pay attention to you.

Instead of training their dogs to control their barking, many owners set about punishing the dog for barking. This simply teaches the dog not to bark when the owner is present and it becomes an owner-absent barking problem. The problem now arises that the owner cannot praise the dog for barking when it is needed to warn him of intruders. Owner attitude can often be at the root of the problem. They either
ignore the problem or want to beat-up the dog or make poor excuses for why they cannot find the time to train their dogs. Some owners think it is “cute” when a puppy barks at visitors and they say he is already “protecting his property.” The puppy soon realises that barking gets him lots of attention. Worse is to come when, the owners, in an attempt to quiet their dog, gently stroke the dog as they say “Shush.” This in fact rewards the dog for barking because the dog interprets the stroking as approval from the owner—they are actually training the dog to bark!

The **sheer excitement** of some anticipated activity such as going for a walk or a ride will have some dogs jumping and barking for joy when they see you touch their leads or the car keys. **Changing your routine** may have a calmative effect. **Barking in the car** can be interrupted with the use of the sound can (tin with stones), darkening of the windows, blindfolding the dog or securing him in such a way that he cannot rush from window to window. Getting your dog to lie down in the car also helps. If your dog is generally over-excited and has trouble settling down after some fun activity it is worth consulting your vet about a change in diet or the use of behavioural medication.

When dogs are well behaved they are ignored by most owners. Very few will go and stroke their dog when it is lying peacefully in the house or garden. They in fact take good behaviour for granted. However, when the dog barks he gets lots of attention and soon the dog learns that if he want to get attention, barking is one way of getting it even if it is unpleasant. Remember that **dogs do not know the difference between positive and negative attention.** It’s all attention to them.
Some dogs actually **bark to get attention**. Although we may consider yelling to be a form of punishment, many excitable and demanding dogs would rather be shouted at than ignored. Yelling at such a dog when he barks is actually the same as rewarding him for barking. Turning ones back on the dog and walking off or isolating him for a while may be the best way to put a stop to the behaviour. By giving in to the dog when it barks for attention is rewarding it for barking. Wait for at least thirty seconds of quiet before praising silence.

Dogs are clever at working out **what works for them**. If allowed to stand at the door and run along the fence and bark at people or the postman, the dog scores a psychological victory which reinforces the behaviour. “I bark—they go away!” This encourages **territorial aggression** which endangers your friends and visitors to your home.

**Here are some solutions to barking that may be helpful in your case:**

**When the Owner is absent:**

As soon as owners become aware of complaints about their dogs barking when they are away from home, every effort should be made to control the problem while they are away. Until the problem can be solved dogs should not be left outside when there are lots of traffic and other disturbances that will set them off or their barking can upset the neighbours. It may not be easy but clever thinking can create a situation where dogs can be kept in part of the house where the radio can be played and curtains can be drawn to muffle outside noises. Disconnect doorbells and telephones. Getting a **house sitter** until the problem is under control may be a good idea because
it should only take a few days to break a barking habit and the house sitter need not come every day. *Dogs that are alone at home are the most common barking offenders!*

**When the Owner is Present:**

It is the **owner’s responsibility** to **obedience train** his dog. This not only provides enjoyable mental and physical exercise for the dog, but teaches the dog that his **owner’s commands are to be obeyed**. If a dog can be taught to understand the meaning of “Come” and “Sit” then he should also be able to learn that “Shush” means barking must stop. Unfortunately many owners do not persist with basic obedience training and their dogs do not come when called. There is little point in having a dog for protection that does not warn you that the burglars are busy carting things away. *When my dogs bark my neighbours tell me that they know there are strangers in the area and they lock their doors.*

When dogs bark their owners will rush out and immediately shout at the dog to “Be quiet” without checking why the dog is barking and then ignore the dog when it obeys. What should happen is that the owner first shows an interest in the reason for the barking, briefly praise the dog for having called and being alert and then request it to “Be quiet.” Their next action should be to praise the dog softly for having stopped barking. In this way they are teaching the dog to understand what the owner wants. By rewarding the dog for being obedient teaches him that **it is a great idea to listen to the owner.**

**Training the dog to be quiet** requires **consistent, realistic** intervention by the owner. Start by making sure the dog understands “Shush” or “Be quiet” etc. When the dog has
barked a few times, go to it and say “Shush.” If he continues barking, shout “SHUSH!!!!!!” Loud enough in an angry voice to make Bozo sit and pay attention. When barking stops, talk in a normal voice and tell him that you do not want a lot of barking. The moment barking starts again, grab the dog by the jowls to steady the head, stare into his face, giving him your full attention and in an angry tone command, “QUIET!!” When barking stops, talk softly and tell him that when he obeys you, he is indeed a good dog. Repeat as often as needed to convince Bozo that he is going to have to cut out his long barking habits. A little is OK but when he hears “Shush” or clapping of the hands, he better shut up. Remember that Shush time has limits and does not go on for ever.

Other helpful ideas are as follows:

Teach your dog to bark and stop on command: I did this with Juno as follows:

First I considered appropriate words which I could use such as “speak” or “alert” etc. I settled on the German “geblout” for Juno. I started by repeating the word whenever she barked naturally, for example at the postman, in order to get the association with the word established. Later I tied her leash to a post and held her favourite food just out of reach and frustrated her for a while. As soon as she started making sounds to demand her food, I encouraged her with “geblout” and as soon as she barked she was rewarded enthusiastically with clapping of the hands and her food. Soon I had her working for a treat by having to “geblout” for it.

It may be easier for you to use your doorbell. Get someone to ring the bell or knock on the door. The dog barks and
you praise, “Good bark.” After a few barks you say “quiet,” “shush” or “sssh” and wave a treat under his nose to quickly stop the barking. Praise the dog, “Good shush” and “Very good shush” and treat the dog. *Praising him in whispers will encourage him to listen and not to bark.* Repeat this until your dog understands the game i.e. when you do not need the doorbell any more to get him to bark. Gradually increase the quiet time and treat. “Shush . . . Good dog 1 . . . Good dog . . . 2” treat. If the “quiet” is broken you do not treat. Be prepared to be very patient with the dog and to do as many repeats as may be necessary. Practice the sequence on walks and in many different places. Once the dog can bark on command you can begin to teach him what he is allowed to bark at. This can be a very useful command when you see unwanted persons approaching.

**Provide your dog with an indoor kennel:** Leaving a barking dog outside when you are away usually adds to the problem because outside there are many more easily heard disturbances. **Until the barking problem has been resolved**, the dog/s should, preferably be confined to an area away from the road and the neighbours. When dogs have access to a comfortable bed inside they are less inclined to bark outside. Leaving a radio on and drawing the curtains can help to muffle the sound and the barking of the dog. Being inside can also help a dog to feel safe and secure and therefore stop anxious barking. Dogs that bark at night should sleep indoors.

**Relieve boredom by providing chew toys:**

*Kong toys* are made from 100% natural rubber that is puncture resistant, dishwasher and chewer friendly. Kongs are widely used for therapy in treating serious behavioural issues such
as excessive barking, destructive chewing and digging and separation anxiety. In nature dogs used to eat meat off the bone which satisfied their hunger, exercised their jaw muscles and cleaned their teeth. The Kong design is based on this. It has a hollow centre which can be filled/stuffed with food and other treats that will keep your dog contentedly busy (working) and out of trouble for long periods of time. I coat the inside of my dog’s Kongs with a bit of honey before I stuff them with kibble, cheese, peanut butter etc. Hooves are also a good way of occupying your dog’s jaws. Remember that a dog cannot chew and bark at the same time. Lunch bag; Put some treats and toys in a paper bag and tape it up and then leave it for the dog to get into it. This will keep them busy without barking.

Exercise your dog regularly: A dog that is full of pent-up energy is more likely to bark at minor things. Once a dog is leash trained he should be taken out and exercised regularly, not only to tire his body but also his mind. If you exercise your dog before you go out he will be more likely to sleep in your absence than look for things to bark at.

Join a club and get your dog trained. Dogs that bark at people walking past your property or the postman can often be stopped when they are obedience trained by calling them and ordering them to go “Down” when they start barking. Praise enthusiastically when the dog lies down and does not bark at people. It is also easier to call a dog into the house when he has learnt to obey your commands. Calling them usually stops the barking and dogs seldom bark when lying down.

Teach your dog to accept “quiet time”: Your dog should get used to spending periods of time lying quietly and chewing his toys nearby while you are involved in some other activity.
Start by giving your dog a treat and leave the room or area for a short while at first so that the dog cannot become anxious. Gradually extend the time away. Avoid going over and fussing your dog at these times so that he learns to relax and accepts periods without any attention from you. It may be helpful to signal “quiet time” by hanging up Wind chimes to remind your dog to stay calm and not expect attention. After a while he will begin to associate the ringing of the chimes with calmness and no attention. These chimes can also be hung up each time before you leave home. By hanging the chimes in such a place that the wind can produce the occasional chime, it will remind the dog to stay calm.

Stop it before it starts: Train your new puppy to be quiet. Whenever he barks, gently put your hand around his muzzle and say “Shush,” “sssh” or “Quiet.” As soon as he is quiet, release your grip; give him a treat and praise. Do this regularly and soon you will merely have to say, “Quiet” or “Shush” and the puppy will stop barking. The treat must be a reward for silence. The dog must be allowed to bark sometimes, but you must control when. Instead of using the hand to stop frenzied barking, when you can accidentally get bitten, the use of a halti may be a safer method.

For some dogs barking may have become a firmly entrenched habit. Rescue dogs in particular who have been in kennels for some time may have learnt to bark at visitors. For such dogs aversive methods might be appropriate. A squirt with a good water pistol or spraying the dog with a hose when it runs up and down the fence could put an end to barking. However, if stress is the underlying cause of the barking “punishing” the dog in any way will only make the matter worse. The “Husher” is a new anti-bark device that has
become available. It is an elasticized muzzle that allows the dog to open his mouth, drink, eat and pant, but soon causes the facial muscles and jaw to tire if the dog barks continuously. *Although they come in different sizes, the Husher is not suitable for flat-nosed dogs, such as Boxers.*

Remember to remain concerned about your neighbours’ peace and quiet! Keep them informed about what you are doing to solve the problem. You may even be able to ask them to help by letting you know, daily, exactly when and for how long the dogs were barking. How soon after leaving the house did the barking start—right after you leave, ½ hour later or 3 hours later? If the barking starts within 20 minutes after leaving the house, the cause is likely to be Separation Anxiety. If it starts much later, after 3-4 hours, then it could be due to boredom.

When your dog first starts barking go and investigate the reason for his behaviour and then lead him away in a calm way to show that it was not important. I have found that by giving a loud clap on my hands when I was at the gate to indicate that barking should stop, I now can stop the barking at the gate by merely clapping my hands from inside the house. As soon as the dogs hear the clapping sound, they stop barking and come running to the house for the occasional treat. This teaches the dog to discriminate and not to bark at just anything. Remember that a dog only matures as a watch dog by the age of eighteen months or two years. A good watchdog only barks when someone tries to enter your property or in emergencies such as fires.

**Excitable** dogs that bark non-stop while playing needs to be calmed down by stopping the game for a while. Quietly fetch him and isolate him in a confined area to teach him that if he
continues to bark he loses his freedom and has no one to play with. Too much barking puts an end to fun times.

Your aim in dealing with a barking dog, stressed by something or someone, is to calm the dog down as soon as possible. However, be sure not to unintentionally reward the dog for barking by petting, hugging or saying soothing things to it. Call the dog away or inside and distract with toys or treats. If you have difficulty in doing it, your vet may be able to provide you with a course of medication to do just that.

As a very last resort, when you cannot afford paying any more fines and you love your dog too much to send him to the rescue pond, discuss debarking with an experienced vet. Fortunately very few vets will carry out this form of surgery. The dog will still be able to bark softly which can be very irritating to people near the dog. You may have peace with your neighbour but you may not yet have peace.

Try different methods until you find out what works for your dog. Be patient. Teaching a dog to stop barking takes time and many short sessions. Make sure that all the members of the family understand and use the same commands and methods to teach bark discrimination.

Two women who live alone and had adopted dogs from a local shelter for protection asked for help when, to their surprise, they discovered that the dogs did not give warning barks when strangers approached their homes. They liked their new friends and did not want to return them to the shelter again. The same method is used when teaching a dog to bark on command. With the help of some friends get them to ring the
bell and then, with great excitement in your voice ask the dog, “Who’s there?”?

Praise and reward the dog for the slightest sound until it actually barks when you “jackpot” the dog. (All the food in your hand).
DIGGING

How to stop your dog from digging holes in your garden

Digging is a very natural, instinctive and enjoyable activity for dogs. They dig to bury a bone, to escape, to find a cool or warm spot depending on the season or because it is in their genes. A whelping bitch, for example, will dig her own den to protect her pups if she does not have a better, more secluded area.

The ancestors of the modern domestic dog had to dig for survival. They dug to store and find food and to create shelter for themselves and their pups. Later, some breeds such as the terriers were bred to hunt underground prey such as moles, foxes and badgers. Digging is in their blood and if they are bored, digging keeps them busy.
It is important to remember that dogs **do not dig because they are spiteful!**

It just comes naturally to them to do so under certain circumstances. It is not fair to punish them for it if they are not helped. Most dogs grow out of it.

**Just because he looks guilty does not mean that he understood that it was wrong.** Anxiety related issues are generally the most common reason for digging. This usually takes place when the owners are away. In the same way as humans will pace up and down, chain-smoke or chew their finger nails in order to relieve inner tensions, the dog may dig or bark or run up and down the fence. Punishment makes matters worse because the dog is not only worried about being left alone, but now also about what will happen when you return home! (See *Separation Anxiety*)

**More reasons for digging:**

No obedience training to channel natural canine activities.

Inactivity and insufficient exercise. To get attention (even if it is negative).

As pack animals they need to interact with their human “pack”.

Boredom, isolation and loneliness, especially after hectic weekends or school holidays. It is often a sign of separation anxiety if he digs when owner is absent.

It is in the genes: Terriers and hounds are the main culprits.
Being locked away while garden services dug in the ground and planted something.

Manure was used as fertiliser. Hunting moles or digging up earthworms.

Attempts to get to other dogs, animals or people on the other side of the fence.

**What can be done to prevent digging?**

**Supervise** your pet in the yard or garden. That is the best way of stopping the dog from digging!

**Obedience training** will help your dog to focus on the family and be more disciplined. Teach him the, “Leave it” command *(See Cats & Dogs)* for when he starts digging.

**Exercise** outdoors for as long as possible each day or go for long leash walks. A dog will not exercise himself even in a large property. Tired dogs sleep rather than dig. A 30 minute walk twice a day if possible, helps to use up excess energy. *Puppies need more short trips especially after naps and meals.*

Make him work for his food by placing his breakfast in a **Kong** so that he will be too busy to dig.

Let him have access to a place where he can be **warm or cool** depending on the weather. He may dig to find warmth or to cool down.

Create a **digging pit** filled with sand or loose earth and bury some of his toys in it. Make it fun to play there. *Take your*
A Trained Dog is a Good Dog

dog to the spot where you would like him to dig. Tie him up so that he can watch you bury a bone and then let him dig it up. Praise him when he digs it up. Repeat a few times. Later, bury a bone when he is not looking. Soon he will regularly check his digging pit to check for bones or hooves. Before long he will bury his own unfinished bones there and so begin to satisfy his need for digging.

When the dog digs outside the pit, interrupt with a loud “No, no, no” or a soaking with a hose or water pistol. Railway sleepers will help to confine the pit area.

Place some wire netting over areas where the dog likes to dig. Heavy canvas and bricks will do the same until he has forgotten to dig there.

Filling the holes with dog faeces may discourage the dog from enlarging the hole. Pinecones, aluminium foil, gravel, plastic or metal will make digging unpleasant for the dog.

Fence off areas where you do not want the dog to dig. A fence will help to confine the area. Freshly turned soil in the flower garden has interesting scent for the dog and your scent will still be on the plants where he saw you digging and planting. Owners often complain that the dog dug up the plants they planted the day before.

Commercially sold Dog & Cat repellent granules sold at hardware and other stores such as “Sent Off” can be used on lawns and plants to prevent digging.

A second dog for company can keep them playing happily for hours but may not always work because two dogs can dig
more holes than one. *I also find that the owner often cannot be sure which one is the digger.*

The PERSUADER electric pet deterrent kit is legal, perfectly safe for children and pets and very effective.

Arrange for companionship during the day when you are at work, e.g. some boarding kennels provide a day care service or a neighbour’s dog could come and play.

**Confine the dog** to a yard where he cannot dig.

Spy on him and wait until he starts to dig and surprise him with a severe correction or rather distract him by playing a ball game.

**Tobacco dust** and **citronella oil** work well. Dogs dislike these odours.

Grinding “moth” **balls** and sprinkling them in the soil will keep the dog away.

**Praise your dog when he stops digging.**

**Harsh punishment** like filling the hole with water and then forcing the dog’s head into it will create more fearful and anxious behaviour because the dog cannot link your action with the hole he dug earlier in the day.

**Not all the suggestions above may work for your dog.** Try different ideas until you find one that works.
When one has dogs and cats one wants them to live together calmly—even if they don’t want to be friends. Keeping them apart is no solution because you will have to do it all the time and sooner or later someone is going to leave a door open and then you may have serious problems. Dogs can kill cats very easily, even if they are only playing. One shake is enough to break a cat’s neck.

Bringing them together, however, can be quite difficult. If the dog or the cat or both are young it usually is a lot easier than with an older dog or cat.

It must be remembered that puppies are babies and are very curious about cats and will want to get as close to them as possible. Chasing cats for them is a fun thing and is very
natural for all dogs because their prey drive (instinct to chase and catch) is triggered by movement. While the cat is sitting still the dog may ignore her, but in motion, she becomes something quite different and exciting and the dog will obey his ancient instinct without thinking. Dogs usually want to chase and play with cats, and cats usually become afraid and want to run away. Kittens are especially vulnerable because they are so much smaller, curious and trusting. We need to provide a better alternative to chasing cats otherwise the dog will simply continue doing so.

Once a dog has experienced the thrill of a “kill,” especially in a pack, he is very likely to do it again.

When introducing a dog that has previously chased cats into a home where an adult cat is the resident, the dog must and can be taught fairly quickly to tolerate cats, but only if the owners are willing and patient and consistent in their training.

Firstly, you will have better control of your dog if you have taken him to obedience classes. Otherwise, you need to start obedience training as soon as possible. He should be able to reliably perform “Sit”, “Down”, “Stay” and “Leave it.”

Secondly, cats’ lives are never the same after the arrival of dogs, so their living arrangements must be changed for a while (at least weeks if not months). Their food and litter trays must be up and out of the way so that they have “safe” places to go to. The cats must have free reign of the house and the dog and cats must not see each other for a few days. Do not be tempted to “stage” a meeting! The dog should be supervised at all times until they meet. Above all avoid fearful and aggressive
meetings. The longer the problem continues, the longer it will take to resolve. Punishment will only make matters worse.

Stroke the cats and then let the dog smell and lick your hands and then go to the cats and let them smell your hands. Take a blanket or towel that the cats slept on and let the dog smell it. Likewise take a dog’s toy or blanket to the cats to smell.

Later take the dog into a room where the cats have been. Let someone look after him and play with him for 20-30 min. Bring the cats to sniff under the door. Do not force them to stay if they want to run away. Let the dog out and after a while, encourage the cats back into the room where the dog had been. Play with the cats for a while. This switch allows them to experience each other’s scent without a face-to-face meeting.

If possible, wrap a cat in a blanket and hold her against your chest so that she looks over your shoulder and cannot see the dog. Now, without the cat realising it, you may be able to get close enough for the dog to sniff the cat’s tail (this is something the dog wants to do quite badly) and at the same time the dog must see that you are one with the cat.

Now, far away from the cats, you do a “crash course” (about 10 times a day) on “Leave it!” Take a tasty tidbit between your fingers and sit down near the dog while holding it about the height of the dog’s head. Play with the food so that he can see it. As soon as the dog tries to get it, close the food in your fist and firmly say, “Leave it!” (This is my bone). The dog is likely to ignore you, lick your fist or even nibble at it, so you stare at him and repeat, “Leave it!” When the dog realises that you are not going to release the food and backs off, open your hand and say, “Take it.” (It usually takes up to four attempts
from the dog to get at the food before he realises that you mean business.) Repeat as often as needed until the dog understands what “Leave it!” and “Take it” means. What you are aiming to achieve is for the dog to immediately back off when he hears, “Leave it!”

When you are confident that the dog understands the “Leave it!” command, play with the dog and let someone bring a cat some distance away. Have treats and draw the dog’s attention away from the cat. The moment the dog notices and “stares” at the cat, you MUST act and say, “Leave it!” or “Watch me!” and distract with a tidbit. Instead of chasing the cat, the dog must realise that nice things happen around you when he sees a cat. Love and praise the dog when he obeys you.

Feeding can next take place on the opposite sides of the door. This may have to be a gradual process in which you gradually bring the food closer to the door.

When they are comfortable eating while exposed to each other’s scent, a face-to-face meeting can be attempted at feeding time. At first, they are fed on opposite sides of the room.

The cats must be high up and the dog on the floor and on lead, held by you. As soon as the dog has finished eating he must leave the room. After a few days he can be allowed to stay, but in a “Down” position. The cat can now be distracted with some food or catnip in order to relax and forget about the dog. Repeat this step several times until the both the cat and the dog tolerate each other’s presence without fear. By coming together to eat they begin to develop a social habit that bonds them together.
Avoid punishing the dog while the cat is near. It simply teaches the dog not to chase cats when you are near. You want them to become friends and not resent each other.

Always consider the safety of your cats! When I built my barbeque area I included an escape door or “Cat’s crossing” for them.

Other helpful ideas:

A Basic Obedience class will help you to get better control of your dog in establishing yourself as a leader to be respected.

By tying the lead of the dog to your waist you can ensure that while you are walking about, that the dog cannot chase a cat and the cats can see that they are not being threatened by the dog. When the dog thinks of sniffing the cat you say, “Leave it!”

Making use of a drag line when outside can prevent the dog from molesting the cat when he is not very close to you.

Separating the dogs and cats by means of a glass sliding door can be very effective. They can see each other, come very close to each other and even smell each other. With the feral kittens that we are at present fostering for TEARS, the rescue organisation, it has worked very well. The dogs, Coyote and Juno, have been able to see us play with the kittens and that they are additions to the family. This, however, does not apply to Minette or Sparky, two of our resident cats who are not yet ready to make friends. Felix does not seem to mind them at all.

Remember to give your cats extra attention during the period of introduction. Talk to them a lot and fish out their favourite food.
COPROPHAGIA
(Stool eating)

The Greek word Coprophagia, literally means, “Dung eating.”

Most dog owners have been disgusted when they see their dog eating the fresh manure they dug into the flower garden, or see him dig in the cat box or even eat his own pooh. This is not a sign of illness or depravity. Dogs are carnivores and in the wild would kill and eat the whole prey including the faecal matter in the entrails which are a rich source of essential enzymes and micro-organisms which in fact aid their digestive processes. Some dogs eat soil for the same reason.

We are not sure why domestic dogs continue to do it, but once they have started, it can be difficult to stop. It could well be because they are now fed on artificial diets. It has been reported that dogs fed on a natural diet rarely eat their own droppings.

Eating the wastes of other animals or their own could well indicate a search for nutrients not found in their own diet, severe worm infestation, mineral/vitamin deficiencies or it could simply be plain boredom or they may even like the taste? Cats never do it, but most dogs occasionally do. Although it appears not to be a serious health risk, parasites may be picked up. Consult with your vet because this condition can result in chronic digestive problems.
What you can do to stop this behaviour:

Ensure that the dog gets all the nutrients he requires by adding a multivitamin recommended by your vet. Giving your dog yoghurt, cottage cheese and eggs is a better way to provide the enzymes and probiotics he needs.

Remove the temptation. Place the cat box where the dog can’t get at it or cover it by placing an identical tray over it. A hook on the door or a cat flap can keep the dog out.

Leave him plenty of toys and chews such as hooves or raw bones before you go away. Make a point of leaving a different toy for him to play with each day to eliminate boredom.

Exercise him regularly and go for long leash walks to get him to be suitably tired to sleep while you are away.

Rub your hands all over him so that the scent will remind him of you while you are away.

Train your dog to eliminate on command in an area that can be isolated until you can have it cleaned.

Sprinkle tobacco dust or cayenne pepper over waste. Crushed mothballs can keep him from smelling in the area.

Spy on him and shout, “No, no” while you apply a good squirt of water with a water pistol or hose as soon as he shows interest in the pooh.
Keep the area clean otherwise the dog may want to clean it up.

Rolling in animal droppings and fowl smelling substances are also offensive to us. We reject them because we think the dog is dirty and needs a good wash. In the dog world, however, the stronger and more pungent he smells, the more superior he is to other dogs. That is why he will often want to get rid of the human shampoo smell and go straight back and roll in the dirt again.

In spite of the fact that the dog has been domesticated for thousands of years, the desire to revert back to earlier behaviour is still very strong and it may be that he wants to tell you that he wants to be the boss.
Dogs are pack animals and rely on others for protection and safety. While most dogs will be sorry to see their owners leave, some, around 14%, suffer from what is termed Separation Anxiety. These dogs are well-behaved when people are around, but when left alone they panic and become noisy and destructive. Some dogs become emotionally, over attached to one person and are sometimes referred to as, “Velcro dogs” or “My shadow.” Older dogs also tend to become more neurotic about being left alone. They naturally become more dependent on their owners as their hearing and eyesight begins to fail. Things that bothered them when younger becomes more intensified as the years pass. However, it is also often seen in younger dogs that have been rescued from animal shelters. They may have been abandoned or had multiple owners and multiple homes because they displayed unacceptable behaviour and their owners did not have the skills to rectify the problem.
When left alone, most dogs will find a favourite spot to wait and sleep. A few, however, are utterly “lost” when left alone and can become extremely anxious, not understanding where you have gone or if you will ever return. These dogs have been reported to jump over walls, bark continuously, howl, scratch and chew through doors, bend metal bars on crates, even jumping through closed windows or digging under fences. Inappropriate urination and/or defecation may occur.

A milder form of separation anxiety could manifest itself in excessive greeting or constant pestering of the owner which is often misconstrued as being a “loving” dog. Humans also often find it difficult to relieve their inner tensions. We see them pacing up and down; chewing their finger nails, chain smoking or drinking.

Some dogs behave badly when you are away because they are just bored and simply need more to do and more exercise. These dogs do not necessarily suffer from separation anxiety. The difference being that, in the case of separation anxiety the stress/discomfort behaviour starts almost immediately the owner leaves. In general, the dog either becomes depressed when the owner is about to leave, or hyperactive and disobedient.

Genetics, early learning and owner behaviour or mistreatment in the past may be at the root of the problem. Sudden changes in the dog’s environment such as moving home, a family member leaving or the death of a dog’s companion could also be a cause. However, dogs that lack confidence or understanding of what is expected due to under socialization or lack of obedience
training are likely to exhibit behaviours related to separation anxiety.

Puppies must be taught to enjoy their own company and to be calm when you are away. Allowing a young puppy to follow you all over the house will encourage him to become over dependent and anxious when left alone at home. Right from the start Quanto was taught that there are areas in the house where he was not allowed and there are areas where he can relax and enjoy himself away from other dogs even when I am at home. Giving him chew toys that kept him busy in his play area and being rewarded for amusing himself became his area for long-term confinement. He sleeps in that area and at bedtime when he receives a treat, rushes off to his kennel to eat it there. The dogs get fed only after I have eaten which means that although they know that I am up and about the house they will quietly and calmly await their turn to again bond with me which is then followed with a good meal.

**Destructive behaviour** by the dog cannot be left unattended—the owner must do something about it because it will become worse over time (see Destructive chewing)! These dogs really suffer every time they are separated from the people they love most. They require effective behavioural intervention and possibly medical treatment. Punishment usually aggravates the problem because the dog will not only continue to be anxious about being left alone, but now even more so because of what will happen when the owner returns. *Instead of getting cross with these dogs, one should rather feel sorry for them!*

Three things must happen to be able to solve the problem: Relief of the anxiety that caused the problem, protection of
the property that was destroyed and long term therapy to help the dog to accept separation. There is unfortunately no short cut to modifying problem behaviour.

What you can do to help your dog:

Join a club, get advice and get your dog trained.

Puppies must be trained to get used to being left alone. They should be left alone regularly during the week for about 1 hour a day in their long-term confinement area. Check regularly and reward the puppy for being quiet. The aim here is not to let the pup associate the confinement area with your absence.

Create a safe place to relax: Dogs need a place where they can cope without its owner. An indoor kennel to a dog can become a safe den or a safe hole in the ground; a place where it can voluntarily pop inside when it wants to rest or sleep or feeling worried when alone. This “den” is a way of treatment where the dog can become accustomed to confinement. Familiar blankets and toys are left inside or nearby and in the beginning the dog can be fed and encouraged to sleep there. The dog must have free access to go inside or out while the family is at home. Some of my dogs have used the back of my light delivery vehicle as a personal den. Dogs usually create their own den in the home, under a table or in a corner between the wall and a chair or cupboard. By putting a long hook onto an outside door it may be possible to allow the dog to rest indoors while you are away

Over-dependence on the family must be overcome by reducing the time he/she is allowed to spend in the direct company of his owners. Contact time must be reduced by as
much as 50%. If the dog was allowed to sleep in the bedroom, it must slowly be moved further and further away to a position where a lower ranking dog would be sleeping.

For the next two to three weeks, or longer, the dog must not be allowed to initiate successful contact with the owner. Playing, petting, grooming etc. can go on as usual, but only at the owner’s initiation and not by the dog. Some dogs are very good at gaining attention. They will bark, follow the owner, rub against them, scratch at the door, wag their tails, look cute etc. to gain attention.

Before leaving a dog alone at home, the ideal would be to take it for a good walk or run to tire it out and then feed him a good portion of food in his “den” to create drowsiness. For the next ten to twenty minutes the dog must be totally ignored to hopefully begin to snooze while you get ready to leave. All attempts to gain attention must be ignored and a firm, “Go lie down” order be given if all else fails. Do not have any goodbyes, simple walk out the door.

When at home over a weekend or on holiday, the following exercises can be started. Give your dog a treat and quietly leave the room or yard for a short while, shutting the door behind you. Do not make a fuss when you return! Only play or interact with the dog when it is calm and relaxed. Gradually work your way up to where you can spend an hour or more in a separate part of the house without the dog being concerned about your absence. If the dog cannot be left alone in a room when you are at home, there is no chance of leaving it alone at home!
Prepare the dog for your departure. Dogs are very aware of the fact that their owners are about to leave. They see them getting dressed, change shoes, close windows, switch off the radio or TV and pick up the car keys. Stress is already building up in the dog and they begin to shadow the owner and become breathless without exercise; an indication of separation anxiety. Get dressed as you usually do, pick up the keys, switch off the radio and TV then sit down and read for a while.

Leave the house for a short while when the dog is used to being in another part of the house. This can best be done over a weekend. Go across the road and return. Next go around the block and return. Repeat as often as needed until the dog barely notices your coming and going.

Do not make a big fuss when leaving. Save your hugs and kisses for humans! No attention must be given to the dog for up to 20 minutes before leaving.

Paying too much attention when coming or leaving will make the dog more insecure. The dog must simply be ordered to go to its bed or kennel and told to stay.

Leave a treat. Something very nice to chew like a Kong with some peanut butter, cheese or something you know your dog likes and will find interesting and may even look forward to when you leave. Rawhide toys soaked in soup can provide a different flavoured chew a few times a week. Quietly place it near the dog before leaving. I have found it best to give it a short while before leaving so that the dog can get interested in it. Some dogs will bury a bone immediately you leave and dig it up when you return.
**When you return**  avoid any excitement by delaying the greeting for a while. I now find that when I return home the dogs will be waiting in the front of the house to confirm that I am home and then immediately go to the spot where we will meet later. I then ask them to “fetch the kong” and we check to see if they got all the treats out. This creates new interest in the chew toy and soon the dogs entertain themselves by searching for chew toys left in the garden.

**Practice the routine.** The hardest part for the dog is immediately after you leave. Put on your coat, walk to the door and leave. Come back immediately, greet the dog calmly, tell him to sit and reward with a treat when he sits. Wait a few minutes and repeat the exercise, this time remaining outside a bit longer. Repeat. Repeat.

**Exercise him regularly.** Before leaving take him for a good romp so that he will be tired enough to sleep while you are away. This is especially true of the Working group of dogs such as Huskies, Pit bulls, Shepherds etc. that need to have their energy used up with 1 to 2 hours exercise in the morning and the evening. “A **tired dog is a good dog.**”

Leave the radio on the station that you usually listen to so that he can hear familiar voices in the house.

Leave lights on if you go out in the evening so that it is more like you are at home.

Another dog or even a cat can help reduce stress. **This may not work with all dogs**; it could even make matters worse, so great care must be taken to ensure compatibility **before** getting another dog. Remember, it is **not** loneliness that causes
the problem—it is **people** the dog craves for and usually **one particular person** in the house!

**Together with behavioural training**, discuss with your **vet** the possibility of using **medication** such as **CLOMICALM** which is reported to be fast and effective in relieving the suffering of these dogs. Clomicalm is NOT a tranquilliser or a sedative and will not affect the dog’s personality or memory.
In the excitement of bringing home a new dog, things like house-training are often far from our minds, however, the very first thing that we should do when your new dog or puppy arrives at your home, is to show him the toilet area that must be used, because he will have no idea where it is allowed to relieve himself. We must make sure that we show the dog in such a way that he can understand and you certainly do not want to spoil the first days by having to reprimand him for making a mistake.

House-training is the foundation for good behaviour that will ensure that your dog will truly become a member of your family.

There are THREE basic principles of house-training:

1. The dog must be rewarded each and every time that it eliminates in the appropriate area. It needs to be stressed that this is the most important aspect of house-training, rewarding the dog for doing the right thing in the right place at the right time! Punishment simply teaches the dog not to eliminate when the owner is around.

2. When the owner is away and there is no one to supervise the dog, it should be kept confined in such a way that it cannot develop a bad habit of soiling inside the house.
3. When the dog uses the **wrong area** it must be reprimanded **instructively** by taking it to the **correct location** so that it becomes a **learning experience**. Only reprimanding it for using the wrong area teaches it nothing because it still does not know what it should have done.

The **key** to successful house-training is for the owner to BE THERE as much as possible, to establish a **ROUTINE** for eliminating and TO PRAISE the dog for the correct behaviour.

Remember that each dog is an individual. Some are trained quickly while others may not be completely reliable until they are nine months or a year old. Some breeds are also more difficult to house-train. These include many of the toy breeds such as Chihuahuas, Yorkies, Shih tzs, smaller Poodles, Maltese and Jack Russells amongst others.

House training methods will depend on the **living conditions** in which the dog is kept.

**Dog living indoors:**

Small dogs are often kept in high-rise apartments in the city and can only eliminate **indoors** with rare opportunity to go outside. When at home, the owners will try paper-training or litter box training using old newspapers. In such a case the dog is allowed to sniff around, but is put him back on the papers if he moves off. When he eliminates, he must be praised and rewarded.
In order to get the dog to go to the right area, some urine can be captured with a sponge. You can then scent those papers you want him to use.

Paper-training, however, has its drawbacks in that it can be messy and smelly and may take longer to house-train a dog. It does not teach it to control its bladder and bowel by holding on for long until the owners can come and provide a suitable toilet area. The dog may think it can use any papers as a toilet including those that may have fallen on the floor. Generally this method creates the idea that elimination should take place indoors and even when having had a walk outside, the dog may wait until it is back home to eliminate.

**Dogs living indoors with easy outdoor access:**

Dogs that mainly live indoors but have easy access to the outside should be taught to eliminate outside right from the start. It is not necessary or desirable to start to paper-train these dogs. However, there is no substitute for establishing a routine of taking a dog out onto the grass every few hours, especially after waking and after meals, to where he is expected to eliminate. In doing this the dog is taught to adopt grass as his preferred toilet media and will be stimulated by his previous efforts. Always take the dog out on the lead at a fast pace to the toilet area and walked up and down to help stimulate the movement of the bowels and the urinary tract. As soon as the dog passes anything, praise and a treat is given and only then is the dog allowed to run free off-leash. Older dogs usually house-train more quickly than puppies, because they have better bladder control.
It may be possible to fit a doggy door or a hook, wide enough to let the dog through, onto an outside door of the house so that the dog can go outside on his own while the rest of the house can be secured at night.

**Dogs living predominantly outside:**

Some dogs are kept outside by their owners who will only very occasionally invite them indoors. They argue that the dogs must first be house-trained and have stopped their destructive chewing before being allowed inside. When allowed in, they are usually fully occupied with playing sessions and given so much attention that they do not get a chance to make “mistakes.”

If, outside there are no rules as to where to urinate or defecate, house-training would at first appear to be very easy because there is no toilet routine or the need to supervise the dogs. However, when faeces is found on the patio and the lawn is scalded with urine marks and the flower beds are soiled and dug up, the realisation sets in that there are many rules for outside about where to defecate, to dig, when to bark and what to chew.

Outside dogs also do not have the opportunity to learn that it is wrong to urinate or defecate inside the house. Because they have been left to do what they like, they behave like dogs and are likely to be more inclined to mark the inside of the house when given the opportunity. This usually gets worse when puberty approaches and males and females start to mark their “territory.”
A much better plan is to let the dogs live indoors for the first few weeks and when they are **reliably house-trained** they can begin to live outside. However, it should be noted that dogs are companion animals and that a dog which is expected to live a life of constant separation from the family will usually develop other behaviour problems during its life.

**Common Mistakes**

**Misuse of Punishment:**

There are still people who are under the impression that you can house-train a puppy by scolding it, hitting it with rolled-up newspaper or rubbing its nose in the urine puddle or pile of faeces. It is in human nature to use punishment in “treating” problems. Since people do it to their children, they assume it will also work with animals. These old wives’ tales are utterly pointless and only helps to increase stress and make the dog fearful of its owner and to become sneaky about finding places to eliminate. The dog learns not to defecate in the owner’s presence even when taken on long walks.

Dogs should only be reprimanded when caught in the act. **Clapping of the hands** and a firm, “**Outside**” should be enough while the dog is rushed outside to its proper toilet area.

**Dog Never Reliably House-trained:**

When adopting an adult dog, many people neglect to teach it the rules of the home. This applies particularly to the adoption of rescued dogs from a shelter where confinement “forced” it to soil its cage. The new owners feel sorry for the dog and spoil it in the beginning. They assume that the dog is house-trained
and neglect to train the dog until it makes a mistake and then it is punished. They think they have given the dog guidance, but it was possibly in a way that the dog did not understand. It is not good enough to let it out and reward it when it comes back because you have no way of knowing what the dog did. In the beginning the owner must go with the dog to the toilet area, check that it uses the correct place and then reward the dog.

**Causes of House-soiling**

Dogs that soil inside the house are either young puppies that do not know better because they have not been trained or older dogs that were not trained properly or do not have adequate opportunity to use the toilet area.

There may also be health reasons why dogs may have isolated “accidents” such as in a case of acute *cystitis* or bad *diarrhoea*.

Some dogs may mark inside the house if a bitch is in season or when the owner stepped into dog faeces outside the home and walked it into the living room carpet in which case the dogs will want to cover the foreign dog’s scent.

Some dogs may also urinate inside the house to mark territory, because they feel that their position in the pack is threatened e.g. by the arrival of a new dog or if the hierarchy of the existing dogs is unstable.

**Cleaning up**

Cleaning up all mistakes very thoroughly is essential. If done properly, stains and smells can be done away with completely
so that the dog will not be attracted back to the same area. Dogs, unlike humans, are not easily fooled by cleaners that are supposed to mask urine odours. Ammonia is a constituent of urine and therefore any cleaners which contain ammonia should be avoided because they may even attract the dog to use the same place again and again. Rather a biological detergent should be used.

Urine that was left on a carpeted area and may have soaked down into the underfelt must be soaked with the cleaning agent. A plastic sheet can be placed over the area and weighted down with heavy books so that the cleaning agent can reach down into the underfelt. A towel under the books will help to draw out more moisture. Sprinkle the spot with baking powder and vacuum when dry. Afterwards the cleaned areas must be sprinkled with surgical spirits or white vinegar. Other products such as alcohol, Listerine and cheap perfume have been reported as effective masking agents. Do check that they do not stain your carpet or furniture.
What is a “Shy” or “Fearful” dog?

All dogs can be timid at certain times in their lives. It is quite natural for dogs to be wary of things that are new and unfamiliar to them and young dogs may go through several “fear” periods where they suddenly seem to be afraid of new people, dogs and situations. While this is quite normal and can be overcome with continued socialising, chronic shyness that persists over a length of time can lead to all sorts of behavioural problems and make living with such a dog quite trying. Truly shy dogs may cower at anything, scare easily, be unresponsive to humans and pee submissively when excited or scolded. They often hide behind their owners when approached, tails between the legs etc. Shy dogs not only look scared but may remain scared for attention. The dog knows it is a good way to get attention.
Some may become so fearful that they begin to growl, bite and snap to defend themselves.

**How does a dog become “shy”?**

It is difficult to determine the circumstances that caused some dogs to lack confidence. Some may be genetically predisposed towards being nervous or cautious, while others may have been physically, verbally and/or emotionally abused by someone. Some dogs that appear shy may simply have been the runt of the litter and an omega i.e. at the bottom of the pecking order and maybe picked on by the other dogs (i.e. it was last to eat, ran behind the rest of the pack or was left alone, etc.) Sadly though, the most common cause of shyness is often a simple lack of early socialisation by owners who have failed to understand the necessity for this. Some loving, but mistaken, owners never take their dogs out to experience the outside world and to meet other dogs. Between the ages of 6 and 14 weeks puppies are most receptive to accepting new experiences without fear. This is the time when the pup should encounter everything it will have to deal with later in life (people, children, other dogs, trips in the car, public places, vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers etc.).

Some pups spend their early months in pet shops or kennels and as a result some are deprived of human contact during their socialisation time. Such pups may be difficult to train and are often not very suitable as pets and companions. Many fearful dogs will try to keep strangers or unfamiliar people at bay by growling, snarling, snapping or biting. Aggression against people can never be condoned and must be stopped by its owners at the very first occurrence otherwise it progresses into a bad habit. Biting dogs usually do not live for long. When
strangers try to reprimand the dog, it will only confirm the dog’s notion that it was right to be fearful of them in the first place.

**Should I adopt a shy dog?**

It is very important, when acquiring a new dog, to check whether it is shy or fearful. Careful observations can tell a lot about a dog’s temperament. What does it do when it first sees a person? When it is approached? Does it come forward or run away? How does it react to being handled, to sudden moves and noises? A shy dog will often bark and back away from a new person. They will avoid being handled or will freeze and cower (tail between legs, ears held back and down, no eye contact and creeping on belly). If a dog or puppy you are considering adopting is exhibiting such behaviours you need to decide whether you have the patience and knowledge to deal with this problem or whether it would be better for you to leave the dog to someone more experienced.

On the other hand, **being reasonably shy need not be a problem.** Dogs that are only mildly shy (reserved) can be excellent pets for quiet families and for people who live alone. Because shy dogs are usually quite suspicious they can be good alarm givers, warning of visitors and intruders. They will usually find the presence of their owners and their own surroundings very comforting and so are less likely to wander or run away. Their reticence with new people will make them unlikely to jump on visitors. Also we find at the club that slightly shy dogs often learn quickly because they are more attentive to their owners. However, if not handled correctly, shy dogs are inclined to become over dependent on their owners and suffer from separation anxiety when their
owners are away. As a result they may bark a lot, dig and chew destructively to ease their anxiety.

**What is submissive urination?**

Submissive urination is an involuntary and perfectly normal canine reaction to the presence of a more dominant animal or human member of its pack. It is a reflex action learnt as a puppy when the mother turns them over and licks them to stimulate urination and defecation. The puppy learns that when it is turned over it is in a submissive position and the mother is dominant. Later he uses this behaviour to show submission when coming across a higher ranked dog. Now he does not roll over but crouches and deposits a small amount of urine. Rolling over signifies total submission. So, we need to realise that the dog is not doing it on purpose or to spite the owner for leaving it alone at home. It can’t help itself and is possibly not even aware that it is doing it.

Submissive urination usually takes place during reunions i.e. when you and the dog are reunited after a separation. This could be when you have been away from home for 5 hours or just out of the room for 5 minutes! It is important to avoid all excitement during such times. Do not make a huge fuss of the dog, rather greet them in passing and continue with some household chore. Do not look at the dog or talk to the dog. Once they have gotten over the initial excitement of your return you can interact with them by playing a constructive game or by doing a few training exercises. If the dog still urinates a little, ignore the behaviour completely and clean up when the dog is interested in something else. Do not ever reprimand your dog for this behaviour as your cross tone will only make the dog more submissive and more likely to urinate in your presence in the future.
How do I help my shy dog?

Shyness or a tendency to become fearful must be detected as soon as possible. It may be possible to restore the confidence of a two to five month old puppy in two to three weeks, but it may take several months or years to effect the same change in a year-old dog. If you are already the owner of a shy puppy (under 5 months), puppy socialisation classes can go a long way towards getting your pup to become comfortable with other people, dogs, objects and situations. If he is an only dog from a quiet household he may need a lot of reassurance to join into club activities, but with time and patience he will usually come out of his shell within a few weeks.

A major problem one has in trying to rehabilitate a shy dog is that the owners are mostly too impatient. They want things to happen quickly so they force the dog to socialise with people and other dogs. Their well-meaning attempts scare the dog even more, making him more fearful. Inadvertently, they may actually encourage the dog to growl, snap and bite. In fact, a lot of the fearfulness we see in dogs at our club is created by their owners. An eight week old puppy can potentially be messed up for life in one day by its owner.

This is a typical scenario: An owner arrives at the club with a shy pup and is embarrassed because the pup avoids or barks at the other people and dogs. The owner finds it less stressful to keep the pup at home and so does not continue the classes. The dog now becomes attached to its owner at home, but is not socialised with people in general and hides away when visitors arrive. One day the owner decides that the dog’s shyness is no longer acceptable and, instead of leaving the dog alone to decide for itself when it is ready to come closer in its own
good time, they insist on manhandling the dog up to a new dog or person and trying to force them to “say hello”. When the dog shows fear they will either reprimand it or try to reassure it by picking it up or giving it a hug. All these actions only serve to reinforce the dog’s fearfulness. **Forcing a dog to interact only makes matters worse!**

**Guidelines for building confidence in a shy dog:**

Start by accepting that the dog is frightened. Ignore shy behaviours and praise when the dog shows courage and confidence.

**Enrol at a club** for basic obedience training. Two of the dogs at the Club, “Trash” and “Tinker” were rescued from the local rubbish dump. They were abused, frightened and extremely shy in the beginning, but have since passed the **Canine Good Citizen Test** and at the end of year “Fun Day”, won many prizes in competition with other dogs. Reward training helps nervous dogs to feel a sense of control over their environment; because they learn how to make good things (praise and treats) happen. This greatly increases their confidence and enjoyment of life.

Make time to **bond with your dog.** (See: Bonding)

As the owner of a shy, sensitive dog you need to **be self-assured** to demonstrate to the dog that there is nothing to be afraid of, because the dog sees danger everywhere. The dog will look at you for leadership and protection and you must give it confidently. Rather than stroking the dog to greet it, get him to sit and reward with a treat. When arriving home,
instead of approaching the dog, walk into the garden and invite the dog to join you.

“Standing over” a dog places you in a dominant position that will be stressful for a sensitive dog. When approaching a shy, sensitive dog, go down into a submissive position: Kneel down, avoid eye contact and offer a treat. Praise the slightest progress, “Good girl/boy.” Do not try to force the dog to come to you. Be patient and let him decide when to come to you or when to approach another dog or person.

If the dog withdraws after being touched, ignore the behaviour. Shy dogs need to learn that touching is not going to hurt. In fact there should be a reward (food treat) for allowing a touch. It may take some time for the dog to understand this.

Let your dog accompany you as you go about your daily routine. Say, “Come with me,” take the lead and gently “pop” the dog to follow you. Try to leave home at least once a day and go for walks that would include passing people and traffic. Being scared creates nervous energy which the dog needs to get rid of, so the longer the walks the better.

**Protect your dog** from people who want to invade his space by not allowing them to pet your dog on the head. Touching under the chin or the neck is less threatening to shy dogs. If your dog is scared of people, they should avoid eye contact and, at first, turn their backs to him. Offering a treat held in the hand behind their backs could be a good way of making friends.
Play games when alone. It may be necessary to teach the dog how to play. Timid dogs usually do not play much. Use toys, jump up and down, roll on the lawn, play ball, etc. Crawl away from the dog and let it chase you. Lie down near the dog and place a tasty treat on your body. Call in a soft voice for the dog to come and eat the treat off your body. Repeat often and praise enthusiastically. Play tug-of-war games with a rag and let the dog win.

Do not stroke or pacify your dog when it shows signs of fear. The dog will interpret your gesture as praise and “it’s OK to be scared.” Rather act confidently and remove the dog from the fearful situation.

Submissive peeing should be ignored by not stopping for a greeting especially when you arrive home. It is natural for the dog to be pleased to see you and to show submission. Turning around and walking away when he squats will soon improve the situation. Then, when he does not pee, go down and praise him. Offering a treat will also help to transfer the dog’s attention from you to the food and will bypass the dog’s need to show submission.

Find a friendly dog that your dog will be prepared to play with especially if this dog is also not frightened of people. Play with other dogs helps to build confidence and release nervous energy.

Remember, it will take time for trust to develop. It may be as much as 2-6 months before your dog will begin to show confidence and trust in you and family members. Patience, praise and kindness are needed every day. Your job is
to teach your dog and not to scold it. Scolding solves nothing it just makes the dog more anxious and stressed.

Shy dogs should be made less dependent on their owners for emotional support. Instead of following their owners around the house, these dogs should be given interesting things to chew (Kongs, hooves and raw bones etc). They should be encouraged to sleep in their own special bed and not on the owner’s bed or lap! Gradually other people should begin to be involved in caring for the dog, so that the dog learns that good things (walks, food, play etc) do not only come from one person.

If your dog is not making much progress with simple behavioural techniques, it may be a good idea to consult your vet about medications which may bring down your dog’s level of anxiety. However, this is not a permanent solution and you should also consult a behaviourist or trainer who will be able to draw up a remedial socialising programme to run in conjunction with the course of medication.

Never approach a fearful dog from the front! Move to the dog’s side, stand still and gradually move closer as the dog shows signs of relaxing. Going down in a submissive position without eye contact will get better results while offering treats to gain trust.

White of eyes are a warning signal and contact with the dog must be avoided especially also if the ears are flat and pulled back. Children in particular must be protected from such a stressed dog because they are not yet able to recognise the warning signs displayed by the dog.
Object guarding can take many forms, from food to toys, the owner and location and is a fairly common problem with family dogs. This can sometimes become person specific in that it could be a child an adult an employee or a stranger.

A young puppy may have growled at his littermates to make them back away so that he could get the best share. He simply continues this behaviour in his new home even though he is spoilt for food and toys. Some owners may even encourage the puppy’s protective display, thinking it is cute.

Owners also often do not notice that their dogs are becoming increasingly possessive and protective. When they become aware of the dog growling at them, they take offence and either scold him, hit him or drag him away from the food. To the dog this simply means that he must defend his dinner at all costs and it usually ends in a greater display of aggression by both sides. Once a food guarding dog has been given his food and he is then challenged for it, will become more aggressive and dangerous.

However, teaching a dog to be submissive to his owners and their friends is the most effective way to get him to accept his role within his mixed canine/human pack. Dogs do not bite superiors. (The only exception is the fear-biter ) In fact, we should expect zero dogs to human aggression.

If your puppy frequently shows signs of resource guarding by hiding objects, hold on tight with its jaws, growl, snarl, and
snap, to the extent that you are worried or scared, you need to act soon before he is an adult dog. Retraining an adult dog that is a resource guarder is complicated, takes time and can be dangerous. Preventing this in puppies is usually easy and safe.

**What can be done to remedy the situation?**

*Your aim must be to show your dog that you are his leader and that he can only get his food or toy at your discretion and command.*

1.) A basic exercise by Jean Donaldson is called: **Object exchange.**

* Take an object away from the dog.
* Give him a really nice treat that you have hidden from him. *(Never bribe by showing the treat first!!!)*
* Give the object back to the dog.
* Repeat several times in a row
* Repeat at random times.
Start with boring objects that he is not serious about guarding, like a ball.
Give it to him, take it away, treat, and give it back, over and over again. Then gradually introduce toys, bones, pig’s ear etc. and things that he has guarded before.

2.) **Leave it !**” Take a tasty tidbit between your fingers and sit down near the dog while holding it about the height of the dog’s head. Play with the food so that he can see it. As soon as the dog tries to get it, **close the food in your fist** and firmly say, “**Leave it !**” *(This is my bone ). The dog is likely to ignore you, lick your fist or even nibble
at it, so you stare at him and repeat, “Leave it! Leave it!” When the dog realises that you are not going to release the food and backs off, open your hand and say, “Take it,” in a gentle voice. (*It usually takes up to four attempts from the dog to get at the food before he realises that you mean business.*) Repeat as often as needed until the dog understands what “Leave it!” and “Take it” means. What you are aiming to achieve is for the dog to immediately back off when he hears, “Leave it!” This exercise can now be extended to a small pile of biscuits in a bowl. “Leave it!” now means “back off and let the higher ranking owner have the food”

3.) **Hand feed** him for a while. Prepare his food in his bowl as usual, but do not put it on the floor for him. Simply feed him a handful at a time. *If the bowl is not on the ground he has nothing to guard. Feeding by hand makes the dog completely reliant on you for the most important thing in his life, i.e. food.*

4.) **Food guarders** must not be given bones or toys until they have overcome their problem. *They are likely to want to guard these items in the same way.* When it is time to re-introduce toys, make sure that he understands that it is your toy, which he may only play with you, when you decide to play, and when you decide to end the game, you always take the toy away.

5.) When a dog gets **over excited** at meal times he can be restricted by attaching a lead onto him while the food is still being prepared. The dog must understand that the food belongs to the owners and it is only by obeying them that he will have access to the food. On the way to the food he
is restricted by someone holding the lead and he is made to sit for a small reward a few times before getting to the bowl.

6.) Before putting the food bowl down, take one of your own biscuits and holding it high and close to the dog’s bowl, eat it loudly while he watches and thinks that you, as his leader, are eating from his food.

7.) Do not feed him in the same spot or at the same time. For a while he must receive his food where you put it when you put it. Chose different rooms; outside on the stoep, in the garden or in the garage etc. to place the food. Change his dish and feed him at lunch instead of the usual breakfast time.
FIGHTING

While in the human world it is regarded as a terrible canine character flaw, the reality is that fighting is acceptable and even normal in the dog world. All dogs fight to some extent. This is how they settle things and defend themselves from a threat that they cannot escape. They have no idea that such behaviour is not allowed in their new “pack” and are completely unaware of how traumatic it can be for their owners.

Many dog owners, taking their dogs for a walk, do not actually enjoy the outing. They spend most of their time scanning the horizon for the sight of another dog. When they see one, their first reaction is to take hold of their dog and pull tight on its leash or grab it by the collar. Their dog becomes tense because the owner is upset. It immediately concludes that it must be the approaching dog’s fault. The tight leash can also cause the dog to feel cornered and prevents it from engaging in the natural behaviours it would use to avoid confrontation. All these factors increase the dog’s stress levels. The approaching dog in turn senses the tension and behaves in a suspicious manner, further exacerbating the entire situation. Often out of frustration, fear or embarrassment the owner will start yelling at or yanking the dog at the slightest sign of aggression and it does not take long for a dog to learn that when it sees another dog, it is a signal that its owner is about to become upset and he will be punished. Thus, the owner’s presence and actions are a major cause of fights during meetings with unfamiliar dogs. In many cases the same dogs might have passed each other without incident if they had been on their own.
With the owners unaware of the impact they are having on the situation, a vicious cycle develops i.e. the owners react to the dog and the dog reacts to the owners. Many people end up walking their dogs in isolated areas where they are unlikely to meet other dog walkers or alternately take their dogs out at night when they hope no one will be around, only to meet others with the same problem.

While fighting may be normal for dogs, serious fights are rare in a well-established, stable group. Occasionally they may fight to settle a disagreement, but soon afterwards life returns to normal. Fighting in such a group is not helpful, because it will draw attention to the higher ranking dogs that will police the fight. They are likely to lose the bone they were fighting over and they may get injured. However, the social structure of the domestic dog is far more complex than that of a wolf pack, because of human interference and mismanagement. Therefore, with pet dogs the incidence of fighting is much higher and some cannot even meet another dog without wanting to fight. Most dog owners do not do enough training and socializing early on in order to prevent problems like fighting from developing. Also, many homes do not have established rules and routines which guide the dog with regards to how he fits into the home and how he is expected to behave.

Owners must do everything possible to prevent their dogs from developing a fighting habit. Their control over their dogs is simply a must! Basic obedience commands are very helpful and early castration (around 6 months of age) reduces the likelihood of inter-male and dominance aggression developing. However, castration is unlikely to cure an established fighting habit and will do nothing to help with aggression caused by fear.
or social incompetence. A fighting habit does not improve over time; in fact it gets worse, so a good **no fighting foundation** needs to be set for puppies. Help should be sought at the first sign of trouble.

**Who are the likely fighters?** It has much to go with the **sex**, **age** and **social rank** of the dogs. Intact male dogs are more frequently involved in fights from the onset of puberty at about five or six months of age until they become socially mature at two or three years. Their high testosterone blood levels (these start to increase at about 5 months) make them a target for harassment by adult dogs. A *ten-month-old puppy has blood levels of testosterone almost five times higher than that of an adult dog. This provides them with a characteristic odour that males can pick up from afar. They will then want to dominate the pup, by standing over it and forcing it to be submissive*. If the youngster will not submit a fight is likely. During puberty young dogs also feel an increased urge to challenge other dogs. This behaviour takes place whether they are castrated or not. It is clear that puberty is a difficult time for a young dog that is harassed by older dogs and in turn will harass younger ones. However, it must also be remembered that most adolescent “fights” do not result in any injury.

**The greater the similarity is between two dogs, the greater the likelihood of a fight.** While my German Shepherd Dog Coyote generally ignored or tolerated most dogs, he and his brother, Loopy, could not stand each other and had to be kept separated. For people wanting to get a *second dog* it would be best to look for one with dissimilar **age**, **sex** and **social status**.
Socialisation is the key to preventing temperament problems. However, puppies are often removed from their litters before they have had a chance to learn canine play behaviour (i.e. before 8 weeks). They are then kept in isolation in their new homes for several months before attending socialisation classes. When they arrive, having missed the critical window period for socializing (6-14 weeks), they are anxious and tense in the company of the other dogs in the classes and display either fearful and/or aggressive behaviour. Under-socialising causes serious temperament problems and puppy owners must be made to realise the urgency of the need for an intensive socialising programme in order to reduce the inclination for fighting. Puppy classes should reserve a time in each lesson for the pups to play freely with each other under supervision of the trainer. Bite inhibition and social skills are learnt during these sessions. Puppies that are inclined to bully or get over-excited should be given time-outs to teach them that if they misbehave they have no one to play with.

While puppy classes are a good start, in most cases they are not enough to ensure adequate socializing. Owners should also take their pups on frequent walks to meet new well-socialised dogs of all ages. Cheeky pups usually benefit from being taken to an experienced bitch that has had several litters as she will soon put them in their place. Socialisation is the best gift you can give your puppy!

When out on walks owners should continue to praise friendly encounters with other dogs in the same way as was done during socialisation training. However, they must insist on a no-fight policy. The dog must learn that, regardless of who started the trouble, they are going to get scolded. The owner must get angry and not stop shouting until the fighting
has stopped. Immediately after getting full control of the situation, all planned activities must stop and the dog must be taken home or tied to a tree for time-out. Allowing a dog to continue with a romp in the park or on the beach after a fight is not going to be a learning experience for him. The dog must learn that the owner is pleased with friendly behaviour but very unhappy about fighting. However, if a dog is attacked while minding its own business and tries only to get away from the aggressive dog, it is a good idea to continue the walk once the aggressive dog has been removed, so that the “victim” has a chance to relax and enjoy himself again. If possible a known friendly dog should be approached so that the dog goes home with a positive social experience fresh in its mind and not the attack.

Within the home, squabbles in an otherwise stable pack may occur from time to time. Stay calm and watch carefully. The dogs may bare their teeth and make scary noises, but they may not be making much contact. Mostly they leave spit and no punctures. Humans yelling and hitting in these situations usually just increases the levels of aggression and causes the fight to continue for longer. If you feel you have to intervene and you cannot get between the dogs to separate them, running away (abandonment) will usually get them to stop the argument by following you. (Also read “How to break up a Dog Fight”.) If the frequency of squabbling in the home increases, it could be because you have been pushing the dogs to become pals, have interfered in their natural hierarchy by deciding (incorrectly) yourself who should be “top dog” or because you have been paying too much attention to one of them. Be sure that you are not the cause of their fights.
Breaking a Fighting Habit

Methods for treating a fighting habit are much the same as those for preventing the development of a fighting habit. Remedial socialization and counter conditioning procedures will decrease the likelihood of fights. The first step is to find a dog that is a suitable playmate. It should be of dissimilar sex, age and temperament and then to set up meetings with this dog so that the fighter can be rewarded for not fighting. Gradually a group of friends can be built up by introducing friendly dogs one at a time. This is the most useful technique of shaping the absence of fighting. This means rewarding the dog for not fighting when he is with other dogs. Punishment on its own is pretty useless as a long term method to stop a fighting habit. The only time some force can be used is to stop a fight.

Since the dog “pack” includes the humans and the other dogs in the household, the humans have the right to make the rules and enforce them. By taking the dogs for training and administering fair discipline, the dogs should recognize their leadership status. As such the owner has the right to enforce the rule: “No fighting allowed!” By paying close attention to the dogs it is usually possible to see the beginnings of an argument,—a low growl, a stare, a shove—and nipping it in the bud. Using a deep, firm, voice: “That’s enough!” or “Leave it!” or “Don’t think about it!” can be very effective. If it is not clear who has started trouble, scold both.

A fighting dog is a serious threat for other dogs and their owners. Owner control therefore becomes a very important issue in breaking a fighting habit. If the owner can control his dog with simple obedience commands, there should not
be fights because the dog cannot obey a **down-stay** and be fighting at the same time. *If the owner cannot control his dog it should never be allowed off-leash on public property where it is likely to meet other dogs.* Even on-leash, the owner must pay absolute attention when near other passing dogs so that he can give commands **before** trouble starts. Dogs that are allowed to run free on their own seldom live long. **A dog is always at risk when off-leash!**
BOUNDARY RUNNERS

In all neighbourhoods we find dogs running up and down along the boundary fence barking fiercely at whoever passes by. These dogs are territorial and have become overprotective. They very clearly and aggressively send out a message to, “stay away from my territory.”

They not only distress passers-by and scare children but quickly gain a reputation as dangerous, aggressive dogs. Unfortunately they may also attract those misguided individuals who will deliberately tease these dogs and send them into a greater frenzy,

I have seen the damage they can do to a lawn or garden by wearing out deep trenches along the fence as they charge up and down all day long. Shouting at them to stop has little effect and they seem to interpret it as encouragement from the owners to keep going.

What can be done?

Two things need to happen. The dog or dogs must be drawn away from their boundary confrontations and owners must establish true leadership and control over their dogs.

Bozo should be kept in the house if possible to get the message that things are going to change. After a few days of quiet and rest the dog is let out again and as soon as he starts to charge and bark along the fence, quietly walk up to as close to him as possible and by gently touching him get his attention by
offering him a piece of cheese. This will stop the barking. Clap your hands and say, “Come with me” and lead him away into the house where he is told to “Sit” for another piece of cheese and praise.

By repeating this exercise for the next few days we find that after day four or so, as you are still approaching the dog, he turns and starts to move towards you for the treat. Clap your hands and repeat, “Come with me” to the house where you again treat the dog.

Soon it becomes possible to stand at the door step, clap hands and the dog comes running for the treat. Barking may still continue but not as fierce as before.

The problem arises when the dog does not respect the owner’s request to follow him into the house mainly due to the fact that the bonding between them is poor and the dog does not respect him as a leader.

In our society dogs are treated as eternal puppies. We feed them and care for all their needs for as long as they may live. They are very dependent on us and it never really becomes their responsibility to look after us or the house. Not being trained for it and with weak leadership they often assume these duties on their own. Because they are ill prepared for the job they soon mess up and become a problem to us and society.

Only when the dog gets the message that it is no longer in charge of its owners that it will be able to exercise self-control and not be controlled by the owner all the time.
The first step in establishing leadership is learning to ignore the dog. When you pick up the leash and the dog bounces up and down, ignore the antics; pick up a book or magazine and start reading until the dog calms itself. On arriving home, do not make eye-contact, speak to or touch the dog/s. Ignore them and walk away and they will begin to follow you as their leader. Shortly afterwards invite the dog/s to come to you to be greeted by you and to receive a treat or praise from you.

Too many owners spend too much time trying to control their dogs instead of teaching them how to calm themselves and respect their owners as pack leaders. There is no point in giving a dog a command and not insisting that he obeys.

Once the owner has established true leadership and respect, it is easy to stop the dog from boundary running and to come when called.

It is very much a question of consistency and patience.
DOGS ESCAPING FROM THE YARD

We may not know the reason why a dog wants to escape from the yard where he is kept because he will never tell. What we do know is that he is able to do it. Some are real escape artists and are of great concern to owners from whom I get calls for help.

Every time a dog escapes he is rewarded for doing so because of interesting smells, cats or birds to chase, bitches in season or other dogs to play with while out. It is also very dangerous and many dogs get lost, stolen or killed in the streets after their escape from home.

When a dog has been able to escape 2 or 3 times from a property it is already a habit that has been formed and bad habits are often hard to break. Prevention is better than cure and after the very first escape it must receive serious attention to prevent a second attempt and a behaviour problem.

Finding the escape route

In my experience the first step is to establish where the dog can get out, over, under or through the fence or gate. This is the first task the owners are set. If the dog can get out anywhere the solution is to erect a suitably high or stronger wall or fence which may be expensive.

Most often it is only at a specific spot on the boundary where footmarks or scratches will reveal the escape route.
Next step is to prevent the dog from using that avenue for escape. If the dog needs momentum to jump high enough we place obstacles in the way such as pot plants, small fences or poles to hinder the jump. Chicken wire on the ground can be effective because dogs do not like the feeling under their paws.

If the dog is a climber and can climb all the way to the top of a 6 foot fence as many can, we need to put chicken wire or plastic sheets against the side of the fence to prevent him getting a foothold.

**Booby trapping**

What I have found to be very effective, depending on the nature of the fence or wall, is to place articles such as sticks and tins or beer cans tied together that will fall down onto the dog and make an unpleasant noise when dislodged. Dogs are usually taken by surprise or are very aware that something different is up on the wall and do not even try to escape. There is usually no shortage on ideas for booby trapping. Most owners come up with many good solutions.

What we are looking for is to **break the habit** of escaping so that the dog “forgets” about it while other changes are introduced.

**Dog intervention**

Make sure that the dog has a collar with an ID tag just in case he escapes again.
Obedience training should be started or resumed if discontinued.

Regular energetic walks or runs to burn off excess energy.

Change his sleeping or resting area to a different corner of the yard.

Do not punish the dog when he returns from an escape. He must feel safe at home and not be fearful.

**Never get cross with a dog for coming to you!**
“In season” or “in heat” or “oestrus” are terms used to indicate that a fertile bitch can become pregnant if she is mated by a male dog.

Inexperienced first time owners of bitch puppies are often ignorant of what is happening to their little girl when she is in season and what to do when this happens. If the owners are caught by surprise an unwanted pregnancy may occur because it can sometimes be difficult to recognize the first season. If you are not sure keep her away from male dogs and ask your vet.

A female dog’s reproductive system follows a fairly regular cycle twice a year. Most bitches have their first season when they are at around 6 to 8 months old.

The first sign is a bloody discharge from the vulva which is the opening to the womb, through which the puppies will be born, not where she wees. (It is a good idea to mark the date on a calendar for future reference.) This discharge can continue for up to 10 days and is called “pro-oestrus.” Ovulation usually occurs about 10-11 days after the onset of bleeding. The eggs can then be fertilized for up to 4 days after ovulation occurs. However, it may vary a great deal in some bitches.

By the time the bitch comes into her first season most owners will have decided whether they want to breed with her or not. In any case it is too late because most vets will not spay during
oestrus and will recommend waiting at least 6-12 weeks after bleeding stops.

It is also not recommended to breed with a bitch during her first season because she will not be fully grown and her body is still developing. Very young bitches are usually not very good mothers and often lack attentiveness to the puppies.

**Avoiding pregnancy while your bitch is in season**

In my experience it is the males that are the nuisance and will wear a path to the gate behind which the bitch is kept. If it is a household consisting of males as well, then keep the bitch in her quarters because by interchanging areas it has a very bad effect on the males when they continuously can pick up her scent. It may be a solution to put your male dog in kennels if you cannot be sure to prevent the male from breaking through the fence or gate. Sprays onto the gate are usually not very effective.

Do not take the bitch for exercise near your home or walk her on a lead in the road because it will simply be an advert for all the local strays to camp outside your property and fight. I usually took my bitches in the car to the beach or a distant safe area for some recreation.

Never take a bitch in season to a dog club or show—it is far too disruptive and unfair on other dog owners with male dogs.

Choose different times to go out from when other owners walk their dogs. Always keep her on a leash. You do not want to allow her out of sight. Dogs mate even through a fence.
Make sure that your back garden is secure so that she cannot escape and other males can get in. I once found that an athletic Jack Russell had scaled a 7 foot wall to get to my German shepherd bitch that was in season. Getting the dog out of the property proved to be rather difficult.

If in spite of all your efforts and you find yourself with a possible unwanted pregnancy situation, consult with your vet for a hormone injection to prevent the pregnancy. In my experience it has long term negative effects on the bitch and is definitely not recommended but it may be better than having unwanted puppies to look after.

**Avoiding a mess in the house**

During her season the bitch should be able to keep herself clean. She should only be allowed into parts of the house with tiled easy-to-clean hard floors.

When she is taken in a car or allowed in a carpeted area consider a form of hygiene pants or diaper/nappy.

Nappies/diapers of different sizes are available at most good pet shops or at NSPCA shops.

**Spaying**

If you do not have a specific reason for breeding with a bitch, it remains a good idea to have her spayed to save both of you the hassle twice a year. The benefits are—no unwanted puppies, hormone imbalances or mammary or uterine tumours.
It has been estimated that up to 20% of dogs display sensitivity to loud noises. They usually develop noise phobia after 12 months of age and are particularly sensitive to loud claps of thunder, fireworks and gunfire. They tremble during thunderstorms, cower indoors and will not leave your side. They have been known to crash through plate glass windows, chew through the door and injure themselves in an effort to get indoors.

Dog breeds that appear to be predisposed to this condition are the Border collie and Staffordshire Bull terrier. Other breeds showing a marked tendency are the German shepherds, Ridgebacks, Maltese and Dalmatians.

A dog’s hearing is capable of detecting sound waves up to 50 000 MHz. Humans can only detect up to 20 000 MHz. That is why your dog is always waiting for you at the gate because he has heard your car engine many blocks away from home. They can hear thunder 80 km away and are used to detect people trapped under the rubble after the collapse of the WTC.

When the young dog shows the first signs of fear, the owner often, unintentionally rewards the dog for being neurotic by comforting, mothering or reassuring him. This is interpreted by the dog that it is “OK” to be scared. The owner must remain calm and indicate to the dog that there is no need for panic.
What you can do to help your dog:

1. Join a club and get your dog trained. Obedient dogs are less likely to panic.
2. Puppy socialising classes and the Canine Good Citizen Test help to desensitise them from fearful reactions by exposing them to such situations.
3. If you know that firecrackers are likely to be let off, bring the dog indoors earlier and get him to settle down.
4. Calm the dog by letting him get into his kennel or bedding where he will feel safer and more protected.
5. Don’t pull him out from under the bed or desk if it makes him calmer to be there.
6. Putting a blanket over a petrified pet may work as long as it is not covering his nose.
7. Close the doors and windows and put on some music or TV to dim the noise.
8. Play with your dog. That way he will learn that he has nothing to fear.
9. Be calm yourself. Your body language will give you away and you will not be able to have a calming influence on your dog.
10. If your dog has a serious noise anxiety problem it may be a good idea to take your dog away to a quiet area, such as a farm, until the noise blows over.
11. Discuss with your vet the possibility of prescribing medication to help your dog to handle stress. Herbal Canine Calmer tablets have sedative properties and are recommended for use over stressful periods where nervous behaviour is commonly seen.
There are thousands of animals, mainly dogs, in rescue facilities all over the country desperately wanting and waiting for a loving home and a caring family to adopt them. For many animal lovers, it is the ideal place to find a pet. They look forward to providing the love and affection that these animals may have been deprived of and believe that they will be able to sort out any behavioural problems they may have had in the past.

**Why do dogs end up in shelters?**

In reasonably well-off societies about 60% of dogs are given up to shelters, because of perceived behavioural problems. *Most will make perfectly good pets in sensible caring homes.* A small percentage with more serious behaviour problems will take those habits to their new homes and will require dedicated intervention and understanding to reduce and eliminate the problems. There are also some dogs that are re-homed simply because of circumstances, such as when the owners have died or emigrated, divorced or have moved to new homes where dogs are not allowed. Their histories are well known and documented. However, as some owners believe it is best to conceal anything that may reduce their dogs’ chances of being homed, there is no guarantee that any dog is going to be completely problem-free.

In societies where poverty is a major problem, many dogs in shelters are those that have been removed from townships or the streets where they have had little or no experience of the
domestic life. They have often had to fend for themselves and have never been inside a home or been subjected to human rules and routines. Some of these dogs thrive when they are placed in new homes and become devoted companions, while others may take some time to adjust to the restrictions and boundaries of domestic life.

In some cases rescued dogs may have been the victims of abuse. Often these animals have been abandoned as well and so precisely what they experienced is not known. Some dogs may even have been used in dogfights or may have experienced horrific injuries at the hands of humans e.g. dogs that have been set alight or hung from trees.

**Where it all goes wrong**

There can be no more beautiful sight than seeing a family leaving a shelter with smiles on their faces, carrying a puppy or leading their new doggy to the car. The children cannot stop hugging the animal and they are clearly looking forward to enjoying their lives with a pet that they can love and which is going to be a pleasure to live with. What is heart-breaking is to see one member of that family, weeks later openly crying as he/she returns their dog because they have found that with their best intentions they were unable to cope with the dog’s behaviour.

Despite good intentions, how does it all go so horribly wrong?—Usually, because humans allow feelings of pity and a desire to pamper a rescued dog, to overrule their common sense. It takes an adult dog about two days to adjust to its new circumstances and about fourteen days to suss out the place and exploit any weaknesses to its advantage. Dogs look at
humans for **dog signals** and if they get confusing signals they make up their own minds about what they mean. New owners are often afraid of upsetting the rescued dog by implementing sensible house rules e.g. no sleeping on furniture, no jumping up, only toileting outside, polite behaviour before meals etc. and believe that the dog should be given a settling in period where it can pretty much do as it likes. The dog quickly catches on to the idea that he can do as he pleases and never learns the value of cooperating with or responding to the humans in the family. This lack of structure, routine and basic training results in a dog that is either an uncontrollable and demanding bully or an insecure and defensive bundle of nerves.

**Helping Dogs to Settle in**

For the first week or two the dog should unwind in the presence of the immediate family. Introduce new people and children gradually because you may need time to get to know the dog’s likes and dislikes. Even if the dog previously lived with children it does not mean that it had a good relationship with them. Constant head-patting, hugging, kissing and disturbing of rest and sleep may be tolerated, but it does not mean that the dog enjoys it. Stay away from the bathtub during the first few days if possible because some dogs dislike baths. If the dog really needs a bath take him somewhere else where it can be done quickly and by someone else. Training is the most important gift you can give your new dog. Limit the inside of the house to times when the dog can be supervised and you can introduce the “House Rules.”
House Rules

It is important to start teaching your rescued dog the house rules as soon as you bring him home. The first order of business is to show him his toilet area and give him an opportunity to relieve himself after what may have been a long car journey. The dog may be quite excited or even anxious about being in a new environment and will probably need a few minutes to sniff around in the garden, before he relaxes enough to go to the loo. Once the dog has explored the garden thoroughly, he can be allowed inside the house under supervision.

You cannot expect the dog to automatically know the rules of your house. If he does something that you do not want him to do, correct him quietly and calmly and more importantly, show him what you want him to do instead! Do not allow bad habits to form that you later may want to correct. Everyone who will be looking after him should agree on the house rules that will apply to the dog and stick to them. This also applies to the commands you will use and routines for sleeping and eating. In the words of Dr Ian Dunbar, “If you want the dog to follow the rules of the house, by all means do not keep them a secret.”

The following are some rules which I strongly advise you to follow:

Decide if there are any areas in the house which should remain out-of-bounds to the dog and be consistent in enforcing this. However, keep in mind that dogs are social animals and do need to spend time with their human families.
Make sure you **go through doors and narrow passages first** unless you want the dog to go out or in on its own. To teach this, walk to a closed door and slowly begin opening it. When the dog moves forward to rush out, shut it quickly. Repeat until the dog realises that you are not going to let him out until he waits patiently for you to go out first (usually 4 or 5 times).

**Eat before the dog**. The highest ranking dogs eat first! If it is difficult to change his mealtime to follow yours, hold a biscuit over the food and pretend to be eating the food while the dog is watching you.

Only **allow him a limited time to eat his food**. Five minutes is enough for most dogs, but keep in mind that old dogs with poor teeth may need more time to chew certain foods. If the dog wanders away from his food or seems to lose interest in it, it should be removed and added to his next meal. Food should never be left out all day and night for a dog to help himself. This “free-feeding” gives the dog the impression that he is in control of food and that he does not need to depend on you for this vital resource. Food is a valuable training tool and allowing the dog free access to it destroys its value.

**Do not leave a box of toys** for the dog’s amusement. Toys are **yours** and do **not** belong to the dog. You allow him to play with **your** toy and you can take it back and change it as **you** deem fit. Do not allow him to keep it afterwards. By sticking to this principle you will be able to use toys as another valuable training resource.
If the dog is confident and enjoys physical contact, only **stoke him on the head, neck and shoulders** These are the areas where a dominant dog places his chin over another dog. (see “Shy Dogs” for how to touch dogs that are afraid of human contact)

**Enrol for obedience training** and find time during the week to practice obedience exercises always using a collar and lead so that you can ensure that he obeys.

The **“mothering effect”** of hand feeding a dog must never be underestimated. Dogs should regularly be fed by hand to teach them that good things come from the owner. This should apply especially during the first weeks of a new adoption when nearly all food should be given by hand. My dogs are still receiving a treat by hand at bed time.

Never underestimate the value of **praise**. Praise enthusiastically **every time** your new dog does what you want from him because, “**Good Habits are Hard to Break.**” *Unfortunately bad habits are also hard to break, so do not allow any bad habits to take root* . . .

**The Single Dog**

A rescued dog may be the only canine in a home because he is replacing a much loved dog that has passed away or he is the very first dog the owner has acquired. Being a single dog he is usually granted more freedoms than if there were more dogs. The dog may be allowed to sleep on the bed, may receive constant attention and may accompany the owner everywhere at first. The dog may become so attached to the new owner that he/she cannot leave him alone at all. This becomes a real
problem for someone who has adopted his/her dog during a holiday period and then has to return to work. The dog’s separation anxiety may manifest in a host of behavioural problems such as digging, barking, house-soiling and general destructive behaviour. (See “Separation Anxiety” for advice on dealing with this problem)

The Multi-Dog Home

When choosing a dog that will live in harmony with the existing resident dog or dogs, it is better to choose a dog that is completely opposite in all respects to the dogs that are already in the household i.e. different sex, age and dominance level. It should also be kept in mind that while dogs of completely different sizes can get on well together, a large, young dog can make the life of a small, elderly dog quite unpleasant, simply because the youngster overpowers the older dog with its playful exuberance. The initial introduction should always be done on neutral territory so that neither dog has the advantage of territorial rights. (For more information see: “Introducing a New dog to the Dogs in Your Family”)

It is very important to be realistic about how things are going. Some dogs may squabble a bit at first or may avoid or ignore each other. This is not the end of the world as a period of adjustment is often needed for two adult dogs to accept each other’s presence. However, if the dogs are constantly challenging each other and you find yourself having to separate them every few minutes, the question must be asked whether you should give a home to a rescued dog that is going to upset the quality of your life and that of your resident dog. In such cases it is better to return the rescued dog to the shelter sooner rather than later, before he or she develops more behavioural
Dealing with difficult histories and problem behaviours
Dogs with a history of abuse that show signs of general shyness and phobias will need extra help to settle down and to learn to enjoy life again. Please read “Shy Dogs” for more information on caring for such dogs. For more information on specific behavioural problems (barking, digging, house training issues etc.) see the articles under “Problems”.

For a rescued dog success story please read about “Emily” below:

“Emily”

Emily was about 2 years old when we found her in November 2001 wondering along in the middle of the road just outside our village in a state of near collapse. She was literally skin and bone with most of her fur having fallen out due to severe mange. It did not take us long at all to get hold of her and get her into the back of the car. She offered no resistance—it was like she had simply given up.

Our first thought was to phone TEARS, (The Emma Animal Rescue Society) as we felt that they were the best people to help. We were advised to take her straight to St Francis veterinary clinic, where she stayed for one week receiving excellent veterinary care. We then took her home and tried to introduce her to a normal life.

By that stage TEARS had managed to confirm that Emily was a dog in a case that they had been called out to investigate,
as the neighbours had reported her being beaten regularly and living in appalling conditions. It seemed that somehow the owners got wind of the situation and dumped her before TEARS arrived. Everything that we saw confirmed this story, as Emily was absolutely terrified of everything. For the first few days she did not wag her stump of a tail even once. She simply sat in a corner on an old blanket we had given her and watched the world with wary eyes.

The first contact she made with me was on the third day: I was sitting quietly on the floor nearby wondering how on earth to begin to bond with this poor, abused creature, when she slowly crawled towards me. She got close enough to rest her head on my lap and then just lay there. From that moment things started to change. I noticed a sort of contentment come over her when I patted her or tried to brush all the mangy scale from her skin. She would almost melt at a gentle touch and never seemed to grow tired of affection.

However, Emily had many behavioural problems: She would run away if you picked up any object in your hand, vomit if she went in the car, bark and spin circles if the telephone rang, steal food at every opportunity, escape from the property to try to find us if we went out, snap if she was cornered by a stranger and she even tended to want to “rescue” floating things from water (including a little boy whom she hauled out of the lagoon by his T-shirt!). All in all life with Emily was not easy and we knew that there was lots of work to be done.

As soon as possible, before her fur had even grown back, I started taking Emily along to training classes. Emily thrived on the positive training techniques that we employ at the club and her confidence started to grow. With reward training
(particularly the clicker method), Emily began to realise that she did have some control over what happened to her i.e. she could make good things happen (praise and treats) by performing certain exercises. Gradually she stopped behaving like a helpless victim and started trying all sorts of things to see what wonderful rewards she could get out of me. As people at the club made a fuss of her and fed her, she began to view new people in a positive light and was soon good at soliciting affection and treats from almost everybody!

Emily progressed so quickly after that, that in July 2001 she achieved her Canine Good Citizen Certificate and went on over the next few years to win several rosettes in obedience competitions. Emily has become a dog that enjoys life to the full: she loves being patted by all people, is completely ball-mad, plays enthusiastically with other dogs and is completely devoted to her “mommy”. She has become the most easy-going and well-behaved dog we have ever had!

Because of Emily’s sweet and gentle nature, as well as her love of affection, I decided in 2005 to have her assessed as a “Pets As Therapy” dog. She passed the test with flying colours and now visits a home for the elderly and a school for the mentally challenged. Emily loves her new job and she is a great hit with the elderly and children alike!

Emily is truly a rescued dog success story—we often whisper in her ear that she is the best dog in the world, ever!

Taryn Blyth

Comment: The continual use of inescapable punishment teaches a dog to literally do nothing. The level of anxiety in
a dog that cannot escape intense punishment increases up to a level that is known as **learned helplessness**. The dog will do nothing further to avoid the punishment and will simply endure what its master dishes out. Efforts to get some reaction from the dog will largely be ineffectual. This would seem to be what had happened to **Emily** and is clear from her initial lack of response to human contact. Repeated punishment can **never** be a solution to any problem.
ADDING A DOG

“The worst way to introduce two dogs is head to head in a small space.” Gwen Bailey

It is not uncommon for families to decide to get a companion for their dog to play with while they are away at work and the children are at school. Very often they are able to add the newcomer to the family with relative ease and since they experienced very few problems in the process, may end up with a multi-dog household. However, not all additions to a canine family are trouble free because dogs have their own clear-cut rules about an ideal companion for them and inexperienced owners may not have given enough thought to the selection of the new dog. It may be fine with the other dog/s but may hate cats or may not be sure of children. We may regard the dog as “part of my family,” but it must be remembered that by bringing the dog into your home, you allowed him to join your “pack.”

It then is your responsibility as the owner and pack leader to ensure that the new addition becomes a happy, well-adjusted member of the family or pack. Thus, the dog’s behaviour, no matter how difficult or how much of a problem, is your responsibility and if you cannot cope, the dog becomes the loser and gets banished to the backyard or returned to the shelter. That is why great care must be taken in not only choosing the correct dog but also deciding on what training it is going to get otherwise the perfect pet can easily become the perfect pest. What you will get out of your dog depends
largely on what you put into him and the realistic expectations you have of him.

**Choosing a dog**

Breed selection is a very subjective matter. Adults often choose a similar breed to the one their parents or friends owned. Some people like big dogs while others prefer small dogs. Different breeds have specific advantages or disadvantages that may require some reading. Irrespective of the choice, at the end of the day a dog is still a dog. What is most important is that everyone in the family agrees, not only to have or add a dog, but to agree to having a specific dog, puppy or adult, male or female and are committed to applying the same house rules and use the same commands.

If there is already another dog in the home then greater care must be taken in the selection of the newcomer in order to avoid problems that may occur, if not immediately but in the future. You may have been lucky and have successfully introduced another dog into the family, but to avoid the risk of fighting it is generally better to choose a bitch if the resident one is a male and vice-versa, a male as companion for a bitch. Have them neutered if you do not want to breed with them.

**There is no such thing as equality amongst dogs!** Pecking order is very relevant to all dogs and when they meet they invariably set about determining where they fit in relation to the other one. This happens irrespective of how the owner has established his dominance as pack leader. Dogs will still compete for status whether it is for No 3 and 4, or No. 6 and 7 in the pack. Worse choice would be two dogs of equal status, like two brothers or two sisters from the same litter, because
over time they are constantly going to compete for “top dog” status. Getting a puppy that does not yet show any dominance may be a solution to this problem. However, puppies grow fairly quickly and may at a later stage show dominant character traits. If the dog at home is elderly then it must be protected from a boisterous pup that wants to play rough.

Dogs, when allowed to, are very capable to establish a pecking order with clear-cut rules within their pack. Since two dogs already constitute a pack, any newcomer will be involved in the process of determining which position it is going to fill. Once sorted out between them, they quickly settle down and live in relative harmony. It is human interference that usually is the cause of dogs fighting. A common mistake is for the humans to decide that the dog they had the longest should be the top dog. Rather watch them closely for signs of dominance and submission. The submissive one will likely lie down when the other one wanted to smell her.

However, humans can go a long way to avoid conflict by choosing one that is very opposite to the one they have at home. Opposite sex, dissimilar breed, age and size difference and a difference in temperament are what should be considered. If the dog at home is a large, dominant male getting on in years, then a young, placid bitch would likely be a good companion. Dogs of opposite sex are more likely to get along than two of the same sex and will have fewer squabbles. The younger the dog is, the more active it is likely to be, the less set in its way and the quicker it will learn and adapt. Temperament is usually very closely linked to the breed of dog. Questions like; good with children, other pets, strangers, guarding, energy levels, trainability or cuddliness are amongst those to be considered before choosing a dog.
Meeting your dog/s

Two dogs should never be allowed to meet head to head for the first time, especially not in a confined space. The likelihood of a defensive display of aggression by one of the dogs is very real because of the feeling of being trapped with no option of escape.

What works best for me is to take both dogs for a walk in a fairly large space that is an unfamiliar area for both dogs. The owner walks with his own dog and the newcomer is with a friend. The newness of the area will occupy the interest of the dogs and they will not be too interested in each other. At first the dogs are walked on a short but loosely held leash and at a brisk pace, not allowing for sniffing or peeing along the way. This, not only gets rid of any pent-up energy after having been cooped up in a kennel or car, but it also serves to establish leadership, respect and bonding in the process. After a brief rest to explore, away from each other, both dogs are now walked on parallel lines to each other about a road width apart.

The handlers continue to walk in the same direction for as long as possible while keeping up a friendly discussion and gradually moving closer to each other.

At this stage the new dog takes the lead closely followed by the own or resident dog in order for it to have a good bum sniff (our handshake) before reversing positions and allowing the newcomer a sniff of its future friend. The leads must now be kept as slack as possible to avoid body signals from the handlers. The dogs will mostly be ignoring each other even while walking near each other, which is the signal for the handlers to slow down and eventually to stop. With luck the
dogs will start to play, but most dogs will still show little interest in the other one. This can be regarded as a successful first introduction if there has been no fighting. Dogs need time to get to know each other and still need to work out a hierarchy. What is quite normal is that one of the dogs may resort to a dominant posture when he thinks the other one has taken a liberty that it should not have taken. They will sort it out as long as there is no human interference. The danger is that the balance will be upset by someone rushing in to scold the one they think has started the trouble and in so doing may elevate the wrong dog and upset the dominance/submissive levels. Although such a confrontation can be frightening to humans, it usually is a lot of noise and some spit on their coats. **It must be stressed that the initial on leash walking next to each other must be fairly passive.**

*I have applied this method successfully in urban areas where I started the new dog on the opposite pavement to the new owner and then gradually moved closer to him as we chatted to each other.*

**Arriving home**

If the dogs have been playing with each other it may be possible to take them home in the same car. With both dogs well exercised they can be taken home and let into the garden. The new dog will immediately smell that there is a resident dog living there and, as the intruder, may at first act in a shy manner. It may be a good idea to leave the new dog to run in the garden on his own so that he can familiarise himself with the property. Wait until he wants to go to the toilet. Take him to the place where you want him to eliminate. Praise him enthusiastically and reward him with some treats. This will be
the start of a good habit right from the beginning and prevent accidents in the home on his first day. Be careful not to allow him to be overwhelmed by too many new experiences of people and dogs in a strange place and in a short time.

Be sure to have removed anything that they are likely to fight over such as toys, food, beds and bowls. Separate the dogs while you allow the new dog to explore the garden. Keep the family away until later when they are introduced to the dog one at a time.

Meeting

If the children did not go along to meet the new addition, then they will be all excited at home waiting for the arrival of their new pet. It is important that the new dog is not crowded by the children and they must be told to treat him with respect and not to touch him until they have been given an opportunity to meet him one at a time. Start with the eldest child who must stand upright and still while the new dog is brought to smell him or her. Then place the open palm of the child’s hand on top of your open palm with a treat on the child’s hand and supervise the dog taking it gently. Allow the child to continue feeding him a few times on his own before repeating the process with other younger children.

Entering the house

When taking the dog on leash into your home for the first time, remember to enter first, and then invite the new family member into the house and straight to the kitchen or eating place. Offer him some food and water and get him to sit down quietly or settle on his bed. Do not allow him to wander around
the house and explore on his own. You will gradually invite him into rooms where he is allowed to go and the family will be briefed on what is off-limits for the dog. At first, my dogs are not allowed in the lounge or bedrooms unless invited.

Remember, everything is new for the dog. He is learning from you what is allowed and what not and you do not have to explain yourself. When you are ready you can change the rules as long as everyone dealing with the dog is informed. My new dog sleeps outside in a kennel for a while before being allowed to join the others.
PULLING ON THE LEASH

How to teach your dog to walk next to or behind you on a loose leash.

Medium and large breed dogs are often left untrained until they are 6 to 8 months of age or older. During this time of rapid growth and increased strength, whenever the dog was taken for a walk, he/she would enthusiastically pull ahead especially after having been confined for a while.

Dogs pull because of eagerness to explore and exercise, because they naturally walk faster than humans and because they have a natural inclination to pull in the same way as draft animals. If you put a collar around their necks, they will pull as we have often seen huskies pulling sleds.

Dog owners, in an attempt to prevent their dog from going ahead on a walk will pull backwards on the leash to slow the dog down. This action creates tension between handler and dog with the result that the dog not only pulls harder but it is the owner’s reaction that is creating a more determined pulling from the dog. In a way one can say the owner is inadvertently encouraging pulling.

Remember: “Dogs do what works!”

When the dog pulls ahead and the owner/trainer moves forward with him/her, then the dog is being rewarded for pulling!!! The result of this is that the dog will not only continue to pull but will do so with extra determination because of previous
rewards for doing so. They can pull so strongly that you can be pulled off your feet. It certainly is not a pleasure to go for walks with such a dog.

When this happens it is too late for methods used in puppy training when we play the red light, green light game. When the pup pulls ahead and the leash tightens, the “red light” comes on and you stop walking. As soon as the leash slackens, the “green light” is on and you move forward again etc. If the dog learns that each time he pulls and you stop he will eventually walk without pulling.

If you have followed the method described in “Getting started—Heeling” in the section called: Basic Obedience Training, you should have your dog walking naturally on your left hand side while he is following and looking at the lure (food) which is held close to your left shoulder, somewhere between your eyes and that of the dog. However, there is a big difference between “heeling” (Hold that position in traffic) and “walkies” for enjoyment and relaxation.

**How can you help your dog?**

**Teach your dog to follow you off-leash.**

With puppies and young dogs this is usually a lot easier especially if you carry food. Start off in a safe place where you can play with your dog so that he enjoys your company and then start walking in a direction enticing the dog to follow you by using food, calling and slapping your side etc. When the dog starts to follow you, immediately shower praise on him, however, as soon as he passes ahead of you, show him that you are the leader and go in the opposite direction. If the
dog goes left you turn right and vice versa. If he slows down you speed up. Praise in a happy voice each time the dog is in a **following position** and feed him the treats you are carrying. Repeat the same procedure during the first few days. *I usually remark that, “The dog thinks that since you do not seem to know where you are going, he better start following you.”*

**Walking On—leash**

**Method 1**

Attach a snug-fitting collar or choke chain and a longish leash to the dog. Go to an open field or a quiet place where you intend training the dog. Have the dog sitting in the heel position.

Place the thumb of your right hand through the loop at the **end of the leash** and close your fingers around the leash. Now take the leash with your left hand so that both hands touch each other. Lower both hands to around or just below waist level. *The leash should be hanging loose. The point here is that the dog is going to learn that when the lead is loose, he/she is doing the right thing. The leash only pulls tight after a warning and indicates that he/she is heading in the wrong direction.*

Step off on your left leg as you say, “**Come with me.**” Walk in a straight line until the dog passes you, which will be about four paces. Immediately call the **dog’s name** as you turn to your **right** so that the dog is now behind you. Carry on walking at the same pace and praise the dog when he catches up to you. However, the moment he passes you again, the same procedure of **name** and **right turn** is followed. Since both your hands are still held together holding the end of the leash in front of you,
you could not correct the dog. The dog received a correction for not coming with you quickly enough after hearing his name to alert him that you are going to turn.

Continue walking in ever larger squares warning, praising and turning. Do not look at the dog. It is for the dog to come with you and not the other way around. Praise him, “Good dog” as he gets near to you. Turn each time your dog passes you. The reason for turning constantly is to get the dog to pay attention to you and where you are going. By turning in different directions the dog cannot predict where you are heading.

Take a break. Let the dog relax for a few minutes and repeat the above over and over or as often as needed.

Using this method I can get any dog, no matter how bad the pulling on the leash had been, to walk calmly next to me within a few minutes. However, it may take some time to make it a habit. Owners need to persist for a while before the bad habit is broken.

Remember, it is not necessary for the dog to walk close to your left side at this stage. What is aimed at is for the dog to walk next to you and to attend to your movements.

**Method 2**

Choose a long straight wall or fence to assist in this training exercise. Using a fairly short lease, say, “Come with me” and start walking with the dog on your left side as close to the wall as needed to prevent your dog from going ahead of you. Make use of your legs and hips to narrow the gap between you and the wall. It may help to sometimes squeeze the dog’s
neck slightly to prevent him surging ahead. After a very short while most dogs get the hang of the exercise and stop pulling ahead.

At the club we go to the car park and lead the dog between parked cars using hips and legs to force the dog to follow the handler.

**Method 3**

Attach a leash and get the dog sitting in the heel position. Wait patiently until the dog settles down and looks at you from a sitting position. Take one large step forward on the left leg and halt. The dog will immediately set off and overshoot. Calmly encourage him to get back into the starting position and when he is ready, take another large step forward. Treat and praise each time he has found the correct heeling position on a *loose leash*. Repeat until the dog realises that you are only going to take one step at a time as soon as he is in the desired place. Now you progress to two large paces forward followed by three, five, ten paces etc. Alternate the walk with periods where sniffing is allowed and stretches where close following is required.

**Test your progress**

Once you can get your dog to walk next to you and pay attention to what you are doing it is time to test your progress. When you suddenly stop, the dog should also stop. When you walk slowly, he should also slow down and when you step out, your dog must keep up with you.
Fireworks are usually associated with spectacular displays or fun activities. Although it may be enjoyed by family and friends it can be a nightmare for our much-loved animals. We need to think of their safety as we would the safety of a small child.

Some dogs don’t seem to care about gunfire or fireworks. Others express mild distress and always want to be close to humans for comfort. Still, many poor souls are absolutely terrified of big bangs. Cats seem to disappear when fireworks can be heard.

Symptoms of fear in dogs include restlessness, pacing up and down, following humans, panting, trembling, barking, trying to escape and salivating.

**What can be done to calm dogs that are sensitive to fireworks?**

1. If you know about firework displays or the setting off of fireworks near you, start early to protect your dogs before the noise starts. Don’t leave your dog outside even if you have a fenced yard. If the dog is usually kept outside, bring him in a few times before the event so that he can settle down and get used to the change.

2. If your dog is timid or scared, keep him in a fairly confined space where he can be comfortable. A spare room away
from the noise may be a good solution to limit excitability and a chance of running outside and getting lost.

3. Act normally and go about in a matter-of-fact, confident way rather than trying to re-assure your dog by stroking and petting him. When you act differently you can inadvertently communicate to your dog that there is something to worry about and may make a dog more fearful.

4. Check that your dog’s identification tags are secure on the dog’s collar just in case.

5. If you have to leave your dog alone at home, take time to consider how he can be kept safe while you are away. Close blinds, curtains and doors and turn on the radio, television and air conditioner if they are available.

6. Read “Sound Sensitive Dogs” in this section.
HOW TO BREAK UP A DOG FIGHT
(Without getting hurt)

Dog-dog aggression is awful to witness, but it is the way dogs settle their disputes, dominance and whatever.

We do not know why a group of nicely socialised dogs that sees and work next to each other week after week will suddenly go for each other on an occasion. When dogs do not like each other that is the way they behave. It is also not correct to think that females fight less than males. I fact, female on female aggression is possibly more common than we would like to admit. Males and females seldom fight.

Dogfights are very dangerous and you should not try to break it up on your own!

You have a very good chance of being savaged by even your own dog when you rush in and try to pull them apart. I have seen this happen a few times. When dogs are in “fight drive” they do not usually react to verbal commands. Shouting at them is useless and if you grab them by the neck, they may think it is the enemy doing it to them and will bite the hand or leg that touches them. A dog in that state is unaware of what it is doing and to whom.

If you do not want to get hurt, at least two people are needed to break up a dogfight.

Each person grabs and picks up the hind legs of a dog and starts pulling them apart wheelbarrow style. Once they have
been separated, it is important not to put them down because they will attempt to continue the fight. To prevent this from happening, continue to move away from the other dog and slowly start swinging the dog in a circle. While both back legs are still in the air the dog has to stay on his front legs in order to prevent his chin from hitting the ground. One dog is now dragged in this way to another safe enclosure, the house or garage etc. before being freed. If this is not done, they will be trying to fight again. *My dog once scaled a two metre high wall in order to get to his brother who was visiting.*

When you are on your own, as has happened to me on at least two occasions, even if you are able to forcibly separate them by pulling the collars, you do not have the strength to keep two large dogs apart for very long without help. And when you think help has arrived, they are often too scared to assist you.

If *alone* and the dogs are locked in a fight, and you do not have anyone to assist you and you obviously do not want to get bitten, take your longest line or any piece of rope and securely attach it around the waist of one of the dogs. Now drag both dogs to the nearest pole or tree and fasten the rope. Once one dog is anchored, you can walk round and grab the hind legs of the other dog, lift them up and pull the dogs apart. Remember to continue to move backwards and in a circle. Drag the dog into a secure place before releasing it. Only then go and free the other dog still tied to the tree.

Methods such as squirting water from a hose down the throats of fighting dogs are not very effective when used on large breed dogs engaged in a serious fight. A dog’s skin is much stronger than that of a human. It is lose around the neck area and has a thick coat of hair for further protection.
Always be on the alert for a possible fight situation developing. Make sure your dog has a well-fitting collar or choke chain as well as a strong enough lead in good condition.

**Be alert** for a possible fight by looking at the **body posture** of your dog (See **Aggressive Dogs**). The moment your dog **stares** at another dog say, **“Don’t think about it!”** and move him away or let him concentrate his attention on you to be led away or to sit and be rewarded with a treat.
When one studies the work of the Dog Listener (Jan Fennel) and the Dog Whisperer (Cesar Millan) we find that they do not so much train dogs with obedience issues, but mainly deal with temperament problems. Bad tempers, mood swings, lunging, barking, nipping etc. These “psychological” problems are what goes on in the head of the dog must be resolved before we can get to normal obedience training near to other dogs and their handlers.

Puppies do not grow up deciding to want to become the leader of a pack. As pack animals they know instinctively that their safety is reliant on being a member of a pack and that in order to survive there has to be a leader in that pack. When pack leaders are taken away, the next dominant dog will take over. However, puppies and dogs find themselves in households where the humans now refer to them as a member of “our family,” forgetting that the dog thinks “you are a member of my pack” it is just that you walk funny.

Humans have an inborn need for love and by their actions of loving at the wrong time, often inadvertently give the dog the leadership position which they, the humans, should take. If after a few days in the new family the dog does not experience leadership he will begin to assume that role. But since it has no experience or guidance the dog tries to carry out the job it has been “given” by reacting with “nervous” aggression to anyone it thinks may be a threat to the pack. This situation becomes worse if it is the only dog in that human pack.
The dog does not look at the owner for help because he has already, through his actions, shown that he is not a powerful leader. So, the owner is ignored and if too persistent, will be reminded with a growl or a nip of his subordinate role. The whole family now gets warned to be wary of the dog’s “moods.” Pretty soon the owners are powerless to help the dog and cannot understand why things have gone so wrong. All they wanted to do was to love the dog and help it.

What can be done to restore the owner’s authority?

Re-establishing the authority of the humans means that the dog must not be acknowledge in any way. A no touch, no talk and no eye contact routine is needed to prevent continuing the dog’s leadership position. When arriving home, don’t look at the dog, speak to it or touch it. Walk right past it, go into the house and close the door. Wait a while until you can see that the dog is calm and relaxed, call it and reward for coming to you with a treat. This applies also when entering a room when the dog is inside the house.

Ignore the dog when it comes to you uninvited. All attempts by the dog to establish contact with you must be disregarded. This is difficult to do especially if the dogs nudges you gently, but only positive responses to your instructions must be rewarded. I make a point of calling my dog to me soon after he has tried to make contact with me and then I initiate contact and play with him, on my terms.

Do not allow the dog to walk ahead of you through a door or narrow space. When you get to the door, claim the space in front of it and let the dog wait or sit behind you. Slowly open the door only to shut it again at the slightest attempt by the
dog to want to go ahead of you. Once the dog realises that his efforts are not going to succeed, step out and get him to follow and sit next to you before proceeding. Repeat this ritual when entering the house.

At supper time get each member of the family to eat a biscuit over the dog’s food in order to pretend that he is getting the left overs after the family has “eaten” from his bowl. Offering some dried meat or food that you have actually had in your mouth will give the dog the same message.
Teaching your dog to swim is a great idea, not only for its enjoyment and exercise but also for safety. Just like people, pets can drown in the sea, lakes and pools. When playing near a pool it can accidentally get knocked into the water or become tired quickly while swimming.

Not all dogs can swim and some are afraid of water so great care must be taken to carefully introduce a dog to the water and be very sure he knows how to get out when he has had enough. Most dogs cannot climb out the side of a pool or make use of a ladder.

Among the dogs that swim naturally and gladly are water spaniels, setters, retrievers, akitas and poodles amongst others. Other breeds are not as water-friendly and have to be taught to swim, in some cases with great difficulty. Heavy dogs with short legs are not built for swimming. Having a short or no tail makes it more difficult to stay afloat.

Dogs with flat noses have a hard time breathing in water. Breeds that do not swim include: Basset Hounds, Bulldogs, Corgis, Dachshunds, Greyhounds, Pugs, Scottish and Boston Terriers. Without the bright orange canine flotation devices, found in pet shops, they will drown.

Other dogs like the Maltese, which are capable swimmers, but are susceptible to rheumatism, arthritis and chills that can be worsened if taken swimming should perhaps not be encouraged if they do not want to swim.
Taking a puppy to the beach for the first time usually finds them not keen to enter the water. Having another dog happily playing and swimming will encourage the pup to get its feet wet. The movement and noise of the sea makes them unsure at first. If your pup is hesitant, take a break and try again later. *Never pick up a puppy and try to get it swimming while it is struggling.* This will only increase its anxiety and will have the opposite effect to what you are aiming for.

To introduce your dog to a pool you need to be prepared to get wet. Enter the pool and call with a happy voice while floating a ball near the shallow top step and coax the pup to get it. This may take some time before he will allow you to touch him while in the shallow end. The dog’s swimming stroke is like his walking movement, known as doggy paddle. Once he allows you to touch him and play around you can attempt to guide him deeper with your hand under his chest to get the feel of the water.

The first few sessions should be kept short and aimed at teaching the dog the way out of the pool. The dog must know where the steps are and be guided to only use the steps to get out. That is why it is so important to actually be in the pool when the pup is learning to use it. Once he can swim and is in deeper water, turn him around to face the steps and let him swim out on his own.

If he has been swimming in salt water, rinse off his coat with fresh water. Salt water dries out the hair and can cause itching and scratching. The same applies for chlorinated water because chlorine also dries the coat and can make a dog sick if he licks himself.
Older dogs tire more quickly, even if they are good swimmers. When dogs become exhausted, swimming and keeping the head above water becomes more difficult.

Do not allow your pet to swim in stagnant water or algae, and make sure your dog does not drink the water. This applies particularly for the dangerous blue-green algae. If it is not safe for people it is not safe for dogs.

A well-fitting life vest is important in the ocean because pets can easily be pulled under by strong tides and currents. Drinking salt water can make a dog sick so after a swim offer your dog some clean water.
Bringing a baby home is for most people a joyous occasion, full of excitement and filled with wonderful dreams for the future.

It is natural; however, for dog owners to be concerned about how the dog is going to react to the new baby. This is particularly true when in the past the dog has shown aggression towards people and children. What often happens is that maybe dad thinks it will be all right but mom is not so sure and they begin to develop doubts about their dog. Many people surrender their dogs to animal shelters for this very reason and many more because of “jealousy” after the baby’s arrival. It is, therefore, very important to prepare their dog for the arrival of their baby.

Preparing the dog

Nine months is sufficient time to turn things around. Obedience training is highly recommended to establish proper leadership and to avoid confusing the dog. When family members are inconsistent about commands and what is or not allowed then it is a person problem and not a dog problem. Inconsistency in leadership may lead to anxiety, fear and aggression in a dog.

During this period the dog must have a good check-up by a vet for worms and parasites that may be harmful to the baby.

If the dog’s sleeping and feeding arrangements are going to be changed, do it well before the new arrival. Avoid making too many changes at the same time.
The dog must also not be allowed onto the baby’s furniture or to touch toys that will be for the baby only. The dog may want to take it back if he has had a taste of it beforehand.

Allow the dog to experience baby powder, lotions and diapers/nappies. Apply baby lotions or powder to your hands so that the dog can familiarize itself with the new baby smells and recognize that the baby is part of you and the family. After a visit to mom and the baby dad can bring an item of baby clothing for the dog to sniff a few days before their actual return home.

**Introducing the dog to the baby**

On arriving home, dad or someone else must carry the baby. Having been away for some time, the dog will be keen to greet mom and may jump up onto her. Make a fuss and tell him how much you missed him. Giving the dog a new toy may also be a good idea. Once he has settled down the introduction should start.

*If there are still some doubts about the dog a leash can be attached.* Sit down in a comfortable chair with baby held closely in mother’s arms and allow the dog to come forward and sniff the baby’s hands and feet. If the dog is not inquisitive, do not push the baby at him. Allow the dog to take his time to get to know the baby in his own good time.

Should the dog show aggression or nervousness, quietly remove him from the room and try again when calm has returned.

*Never leave your baby unsupervised with a pet.*
Recently, while walking with my dog, Juno, I suddenly became aware of two dogs charging in our direction, teeth bared, hair up on their backs and clearly ready to attack.

Juno charged forward when she saw the dogs coming. Luckily I had her on the lead and held her back.

Trying to restrain a big dog on the attack and stopping two others coming at you, is no easy matter. Fortunately I was able to whip out my pepper spray and sent the two packing, quickly ending what could have been quite a nasty encounter.

This is especially true when dogs form a pack in attacking. In fact, each year, we read of several people who die of dog bites and many more are permanently disfigured as a result of serious dog attacks.

These set me thinking about what to do when attacked by a dog if you are alone and do not have anything for protection.

If the dog approaches you barking furiously, it is most likely only defending its territory and wants you to leave. Stand still and face the dog. If the dog stops in front of you barking, say, “You can bark as long as you want but I am not going away.” Wait patiently until the dog stops barking, the head lowers or he looks sideways, and moves away before you begin to move.
It is very important to consider the following:

Every dog has the capacity to bite!

Even dog trainers can get bitten. I have scars to prove it.

Some dogs are fearful of strangers and especially children.

Dogs will bite when they are fearful of strangers on their property. Also when they are cornered, injured or in pain. They are more likely to bite when teased and provoked, chased or their food or bones are interfered with.

Bites can be prevented by following the following basic rules such as:

Not entering a property without ensuring that it is safe from a guarding dog.

First get the owner’s assurance that it is safe to pet or hug his dog.

Never run away from a dog approaching you.

Do not try to touch a chained dog.

Don’t play with or pick up puppies while the brooding bitch is nearby.

Don’t tease or hit a dog.

What to do when a dog shows aggression

When you face the dog, your first reaction should be a loud, “NO!!” to try and stop the dog with your voice. Most dogs have had some training and know what, “No” means.
If the hair on the dog’s back is also raised near the tail it indicates a nervous dog that lacks confidence and is likely to stop, bark at you and circle around to get you from behind. Turn as you continue to face the dog in order to prevent an attack from behind. Remain as calm as possible. Do not shout but try, “Go home” in a firm voice.

Do not continue walking or to slowly back away from the dog’s territory. No matter how scared you are, do not turn and run away!!! You cannot out run a dog, its “prey drive” will kick in and you will most likely get bitten.

Folding your arms in front of your chest, avoiding direct eye contact and becoming a “statue” will work for most dogs. They will stop barking, slowly close in, smell you and after a while will continue on their way when they see that you hold no threat. This is what is likely to happen in 90% of the cases. We hope.

When the dog attacks

If you saw it coming and you have something that you can use for protection such as a satchel, an umbrella, coat or books, hold it in front of you as you face the dog. You could also wrap a jacket or towel around an arm for protection to ward off the dog.

If you can get hold of the dog’s collar it may be possible to keep it away from your body. However, much depends on the dog’s size and your experience.

More difficult to handle is a dog that has been trained to bite legs. Kicking at the dog can cause you to lose your balance
and fall down. If this should happen, the best to do would be to curl up in a ball with your hands clasped behind your neck and your arms and elbows protecting your face, neck and throat. If possible, lying motionless and quiet is best. Screaming, kicking and waving of arms may incite the dog into further biting.

**Be Prepared**

Make sure your dogs are trained and properly socialised.

**Children must be taught how to be calm with young dogs.**

Teach children how to approach dogs and what dangerous dogs may look like; growling, teeth bared and lips raised, hairs on the back up, ears back and the warning tail up and swinging from side to side.

If you know of a dangerous dog and have to regularly walk past his property, you should carry a spray such as pepper spray or liquid bullets and have it ready in your hand to use. If the dog is out and charges, you will not have time to search your pockets or find it in your handbag. Alternatively you should take something that you can use to protect yourself with such as a walking stick, tennis racquet or bicycle.
Hyperactive dogs are dogs that seem to be in a perpetual state of excitement. They have poor attention span, can be aggressive towards other dogs and have high levels of motor activity usually associated with excessive “panting”. They are virtually in constant motion, bark a lot jumping around and over-reacting to the slightest distraction.

Their owners struggle to control their behaviour and often miss-interpret the condition as pent-up energy that needs to be released. They then start a strenuous exercise routine as a solution to calm the dog down. All they do is to create super fit dogs with breath-taking energy levels. The only time they are quiet is when asleep.

All dogs get excited from time to time and will play rough with each other but these bouts of excitement do not last long. Calm returns and they settle down on their own. Puppies generally have much energy and owners may struggle for a while to control them and get their attention. After puppy class they are usually “clapped” and fall asleep on arrival at home.

Certain breeds such as Border Collies and Jack Russells display high levels of activity for which they were originally developed. The normal activity levels that apply to the average dog are not enough for them. This makes them well-suited for games such as fly ball or agility training. Many so-called “hyper” dogs are just under-exercised.
Often it is more than just lack of exercise; it’s also lack of appropriate reinforcement for calm behaviour—i.e., training. By being patient and insistent you send a message to your dog, “You can get what you want but first sit calmly.” Self-control is what must be achieved. Unfortunately, in spite of good intentions, owners soon give up on these dogs with the result that they not only lose a happy home and are confined to a back yard but they may even lose their lives escaping and darting across a road.

Real hyperactivity results in the dog not being able to control itself and therefore not being able to learn—much like a hyperactive child. Detective work on a trial and error basis is required to find a solution to this very difficult problem.

What can be done to do help these dogs?

A remedial programme is called for which includes physical exercise, management and obedience training.

A fairly long, daily controlled Walk in which, for the first ten minutes the dog is kept on a short leash alongside the handler. The dog is not allowed to sniff the ground or pee during this time. After “dominating” the dog during this period it is given an opportunity to be more free, smell around etc. but only at the discretion of the handler before continuing with the controlled walk. This kind of walk combines the physical exercise, management and obedience especially if a number of “sits” are included on the way.

Stay calm—if you get angry or excited the dog will pick it up on your energy and become more hyper. I find that prolonged
hand caressing and manipulation and stroking, helps to calm these dogs down.

**Distract or re-direct attention** away from a fixation such as another dog in the distance by producing a favourite toy to regain his attention. By tossing a handful of treats in the grass as you order, “Find it” instantly re-directs attention. Repeat a few times before continuing with the previous activity.

**Ignore hyper behaviour.** By reacting to the hyper outbursts, verbally or physically, you are reinforcing the behaviour you are trying to eliminate. When the dog is jumping and nipping at you, remain calm with a **no touch, no talk, no eye contact** response. Wait for the dog to calm down before attending to his desires. Most owners find it difficult to ignore the dog when he misbehaves and only pay attention when he is being good.

A **distraction free** training environment such as a quiet space at home is essential. Bad habits must first be attended to before venturing to a training ground with people and other dogs.

If the hyper behaviour is a new behaviour, consider the possibility that the **food** you served may be a cause. The late **John Fisher**, before his death was doing research which indicated that food may have an important role in creating hyper behaviour in dogs. *Unfortunately he was not able to complete his study.*

In an effort to restore calm and control in a dog a **homeopathic** remedy such as **Rescue Remedy** should be considered. It is known to effectively reduce stress, distress, and tension and restores calm in dogs. Naturally, any form of medication must be used in conjunction with management and training.
Management includes **routine and structure**: Time to eat, train, play, sleep and being calm.

**Anxious** dogs respond very well to **Canine Calmer tablets** as well as the **Canine Calming Collar** which is a pheromone collar. Both can be effective first line interventions, often eliminating the need for powerful prescription medication. **Clomicalm** is also often prescribed by vets in order to calm over anxious dogs.

**Hyperactivity** or **ADHD overexcitement is not normal or healthy for dogs.** It is rare and currently considered to be a genetic condition. As such, it can only be diagnosed by a veterinarian or a behaviourist.

These dogs drive their owners “up the (proverbial) wall.” They spend all their energy fighting to control their dogs and are unsuccessful in getting the dog to develop self-control.

The true test of ADHD is for a veterinarian to give the dog a stimulant such as Ritalin or Dexedrine under controlled clinical conditions and observe changes in heart rate, respiratory rate and behaviour. In a case of ADHD, all these parameters will be reduced.
In many countries of Europe the law requires that when pet owners walk their dogs in public their dogs must be fitted with a muzzle. They are not “bad dogs” but ordinary dogs and are trained to wear muzzles with complete acceptance much as they would a collar and leash. This is to protect the general public from a provoked or unprovoked attack by a dog.

All dogs have the potential to bite irrespective of their temperament. Some will bite when handled by a stranger and some when their territory has been invaded. A muzzle can also be a life saver if a dog has a serious injury and in pain and needs to be treated by a vet. Such a dog cannot be handled without biting the handlers.

To prevent two dogs, living in the same house, not to meet and fight is almost impossible. Sooner or later someone is going to leave a door open and a fight is inevitable. The options in this case are; either re-home one or cure the problem using a muzzle.

A muzzle can also be used to prevent a dog from destructive chewing, picking up, chewing or eating foreign objects and killing cats or chickens etc. However, for a dog, wearing a muzzle is not only unnatural but also uncomfortable. Since the dog is likely to resist this restrictive foreign instrument, the correct type has to be chosen and it has to be introduced slowly and with utmost care.
There are many different kinds of muzzles that have been tried and tested. Some are made of cloth, leather, canvas, plastic, nylon and even wire with suitable trim. Some will allow the dog to bark, drink and take treats—others not.

**Groomer’s Muzzle**

This is a soft muzzle (Mikki muzzle) which is designed to restrict the movement of the dog’s jaws, making biting impossible but allowing you to feed the dog. This kind of muzzle ensures that there can be no damage if you are caught by surprise. This is a good muzzle for smaller dogs but may not be suitable for larger more aggressive dogs.

**Introducing a Muzzle**

The dog must be desensitized to wearing a muzzle by introducing it very carefully and making it as pleasant an experience as possible.

When the dog is not overexcited or thirsty, allow it to smell the muzzle, praise and treat with something nice. Next place a treat in the muzzle and let the dog take it out. Praise and repeat. This should be done 4 or 5 times a day for several days until when the dog sees you coming with the muzzle wags his tail and comes forward for the treat. The dog now associates the muzzle with a pleasant experience.

Next step is to fit the muzzle onto the face for a few seconds after the dog has taken the treat from inside. Repeat while he remains relaxed and hold the muzzle a bit longer each time and treat every time you remove it. If he begins to fight to get it off, give a sharp voice correction and a leash correction. The
corrections must be strong enough to stop efforts to remove the muzzle. The muzzle is only taken off when the dog has accepted it and settles down. When it is removed remember to praise and reward.

The dog must not be tested with other dogs or people while he is still attempting to take it off. He should first be happy to keep it on during walks and around the house. This may take longer than a week.

Test if the Muzzle

Every time the muzzle is fitted you need to make very sure that it will not come off during a confrontation. Take hold of the muzzle in both hands and by lifting the dog’s front feet just off the ground you can see if it will stay on or come off.

Remember that a Muzzle is a training tool used only while the owner gains confidence and the dog’s problem is remediated.
Place a puppy at your feet, run backwards and it will instinctively follow/chase you. Dogs are predators and therefore it is a very natural, basic instinct for dogs to chase prey, to herd or run after anything in its territory.

While some dogs chase sticks, others prefer tennis balls. Still others will chase cars, motorcycles, bicycles, skateboards, joggers, cats etc. and they become problem dogs. Because the “prey” they are chasing runs away from them, these dogs get a feeling of success each time and are soon conditioned to continue. They are a danger to themselves and others. The problem does not seem to be breed specific. However, herding dogs (Border Collies), hunting hounds and some of the terriers (Staffordshire, Jack Russell) are the most likely candidates.

These dogs are triggered by the movement and in some case the sound. Since it is also stress-related behaviour it can usually be detected at a very early age in puppy hood when it can easily be prevented with corrective training.

Chasing cars can end in injury or death. These dangerous habits must, if possible, be broken as soon as they start because once this has become a deep-rooted problem, it is very difficult to correct through extinction (removing the reward or pleasure) or counter-conditioning (Teaching a different task or behaviour).
Belting the dog on his return from the chase, when he is pleased to see you, is possibly the worst way to handle the problem. He is being punished for coming home!!! Trying to keep him off the street may prove to be difficult. Chasers are often able to scale high walls for the thrill of the chase. Some owners have had to add an electrified wire to the top of their walls to stop the dog jumping the boundary walls.

Car chasers are often untrained dogs that lack leadership, are bored, allowed to roam and are confused about their role in the family.

**Obedience Training** is a good place to start because you need to get back the control you obviously have lost to your chasing dog. When you shout, “**Down**” your dog must drop like a brick! He must also not break a “**Stay**” to chase a jogger or skateboard. Getting your dog to stay while you go out of sight for 5 or 10 minutes takes some training but is not too difficult to achieve. *I often placed Coyote on the field near the shopping centre, ordered him to stay and then go to do my transactions on the ATM inside and return in about 10 minutes to find him waiting patiently for me.*

With the help of a long line a dog can also be taught to stay within his boundaries.

**Aversion therapy** is possibly the best way to deal with chasing dogs, no matter what they chase.

An active programme where the dog is **deliberately** put into a chase setup must be followed. Get a willing volunteer, victim (*car, cyclist, jogger etc.*) to assist you.
Attach a strong choke collar and a long leash to the dog. Get him to calmly wait or walk next to you on the pavement and arrange for your helper to drive, cycle, skate or jog by. You must have with you something that has previously frightened the dog and will make a loud noise such as a car alarm, a trumpet or a rape alarm or dog training disks.

Since you know what is going to happen, your timing must be right. As the “prey” arrives and just as the dog reacts, the alarm is set off which must startle the dog. The frightened dog now associates the car, cyclist, or jogger with the unpleasant noise and stops. He is immediately comforted by you, the owner and given a tidbit.

For sound sensitive dogs one or two experiences will be enough. Other dogs may respond better if the noise comes from the victim.

An alternative to making use of a loud noise is to shout, “Watch out!” (The moment the vehicle arouses the attention of the dog) and immediately run back a few yards taking the dog with you. Stop and treat the dog in order to teach the new acceptable behaviour. Repeat as often as needed until the dog instinctively begins to move away from moving vehicles.

Instead of using a loud noise, fill some balloons with water and have someone take them along in the car etc. Then, just as the dog reacts to their passing, they stop and throw the water balloons at the dog. Repeat as necessary. It may work for some dogs. This may not work too well for cyclists because the dog can see the person attacking him and may be inclined to respond in a similar manner.
All dogs should be taught to stop immediately on a command such as: “Wait, Sit, down” etc.

While walking with your dog on a lead, have someone following at a distance behind you holding a long lead attached to the dog. On your command, “Wait” or “Sit,” the helper stops abruptly and stops all forward motion of the dog and brings him into a sitting position. Repeat until sits immediately and the long lead stays loose. This method can soon be used to stop any form of chasing.

When walking your dog off lead in a safe area, away from traffic or distractions, practice giving your dog a “Wait” or “Sit” command. (At first you may have to repeat the command a few times because the dog is keen to go “walkies.”) As soon as he sits or downs, say, “OK” so that the reward for obeying the “Sit” command is “walkies,” which is what the dog wants to do in the first place. Very soon the dog catches on and responds almost immediately. This becomes a good way of catching up to your dog walking ahead of you. Say, “Sit” and “OK” only when near the dog. Next the dog can be taken to areas where there are cars, bicycles, joggers etc. Order the dog to “Sit” when cars approach and delay the “OK” until the coast is clear.

If you cannot stop the dog chasing, ask your dog trainer or an animal behaviourist for help.
CONTROL OVER YOUR DOG

“There is no point in having a dog that is only obedient if he is on leash or if you have food on you.” Dr Ian Dunbar.

Most of the dogs I am asked to rehabilitate have owners who find it too difficult to control them. These dogs are what can be termed, “Under cooked.” Their owners took them to Puppy school, bought books, watched TV dog programmes or did some training at a club but did not fully understand the training concepts or stopped before they had mastered proper control over their dogs. They spend nearly all their time and energy controlling the dog instead of getting the dog to control itself. I tell my dog, “You can get what you want as soon as you calm down and control yourself.” You need to be patient but also very insistent.

The following training concepts should be re-visited if you find that your dog is disobedient or listens only when on leash or when food is available.

Dog’s name

You cannot teach a dog anything if he is not paying attention!

The dog’s name means, “Pay attention.” When a dog hears its name it must immediately look at the caller to be praised or rewarded. This is not a request, but a command! If the dog does not react soon enough, clap your hands and say, “Hey, I’m calling you.” Reward in the beginning as soon as you see
those brown eyes looking at you. Repeat often at home, in the garden, on walks, in the car, day and night, week in and out until you have perfection.

“Sit” *The first and most useful command all dogs must learn.*

When a dog has mastered the “Sit” he cannot go walk-about, jump on people, fight another dog, cross the road or grab food off the counter. **Everything can be stopped before it happens if the dog has a reliable, “Sit.”**

To test yourself, have your dog standing next to you, turn your back to the dog, fold your arms, look up and tell your dog to sit and see if the dog obeys you. Make sure with further tests by sitting or lying down, standing on a ladder etc. to see how well the dog understands the sit command when given in another context or in front of guests. Can you tell your dog to sit when it is on the other side of the road or when it comes running to you?

Most untrained dogs will happily sit when ordered to do so but immediately afterwards get up and carry on with what they had done before. They need to be taught that Sit means Sit until given an alternative or release command. I immediately respond with, “**No, sit!”** and a forward movement when this happens. Never leave a dog sitting for long otherwise they are inclined to lie down and you will be encouraging disobedience.

Because dogs have a difficulty in generalising, they need to do frequent sits on a walk, at the beach, in shops, in the play park and in the house until they realise that “Sit” means that they have to obey the command whenever and wherever it is given.
Quick sits and emergency sits need to be practised regularly. I play a game with Polo using two balls or toys. I throw one to be fetched and will only release the second one after a “Sit.” Quanto will only get his food after a “Sit—stand—down—sit” sequence of commands.

**Leash**

*A leash is a training tool and means, “Follow me.”*

The leash should be used only to guide the dog to walk **behind** or **next** to the handler. The most common mistake is to pull backwards on the leash in order to slow the dog down. This pulling action creates tension on the leash and a competition between handler and dog resulting in the dog pulling harder. By doing this you are actually teaching or encouraging the dog to pull.

Do not attempt to attach a leash until the dog is completely calm. When dogs see the leash they anticipate walkies and go bananas. Show them the leash and sit down to read something until the dog sits or lies down in a relaxed manner. **You decide when to move, not the dog!**

When starting out on leash training, the walk should **not go anywhere** but be confined to a driveway or garden until the dog understands the new way of walking. With the dog sitting calmly, on your left side, on a loose leash, say, “Come with me” and step off on your left leg, walk 3 or 4 paces, call your dog’s name for attention, and turn sharply to your right so that the dog is behind you. Carry on walking without pulling on the leash or looking at the dog. As soon as the dog catches up to you, praise, “Good dog,” then again call his name as you turn
to your right. Repeat the sequence of walking in a square. A warning of an intended turn must be given each time as well as praise for attempts at walking at your side.

The walking pattern can be changed to about turning, left turns and halts before venturing to a new training area such as the road just outside your property. Again going nowhere at first. This is followed by repeat starts at different venues. Gradually the number of paces in a direction can be changed intermittently so that the dog has to keep an eye on you to know when you are going to change direction. The dog must learn to watch you and not the other way round as one sees at training clubs.

What is important to remember is that calling for attention or a sit as well as leash training are on-going exercises and require regular practice. If the dog does not sit straight away, call him closer and make him sit repeatedly until you are satisfied with his response.

Your aim must be to achieve off-leash, voice control over your dog.
One of the most common reasons for dog owners wanting obedience training for their dog is, “When I take my dog for a walk he becomes aggressive when he sees other dogs, and I have difficulty in controlling him” or “My dog growls, barks and lunges at other dogs and people.” This is highly embarrassing and confusing to owners because, according to them, “At home he is gentle and friendly and not at all like he is on walks.”

The difference in the behaviour of the dog on walks as opposed to that at home would seem to indicate on leash aggression. When a young dog is taken for a walk it is very natural for it to want to investigate smells, people and other dogs. Owners make use of the leash to prevent their dogs from getting near other dogs and may even scold the dog for pulling in their direction. The approaching dog is alerted to this nervous reaction from the owner and dog and comes closer to investigate and may growl or bark. In this way a chain reaction may be set in motion.

On future walks, the owner, instead of enjoying the outing, scans the horizon for oncoming dogs and immediately stops and makes sure of a proper grip on the leash when a dog is seen. The owner’s dog, still unaware of the approaching dog is now alerted to its owner’s nervous reaction and prepares itself to defend its owner. This scene is exactly how we start attack training. By preventing a dog from getting something he wants, his owner acts as a post and the agitator teases the dog and brings out the aggression in the dog. In reality the dog is merely responding to the owner’s reaction.
To solve this problem training must focus on **voice control**, **leash control** and owner **leadership**. Join a club and engage in quality **obedience training**. Make sure that your dog learns and understands what a reliable “Sit” is. See article, “Control over your Dog.” Teach the dog to sit on command wherever and whenever you are spending time together. “Sit” is to be obeyed instantly in the house, garden, on the pavement and at the beach. A quick, “No, Sit” is used to prevent the dog from breaking a sit command. Praise compliance.

A leash should be used mainly to get the dog to “**follow**” its handler and NOT to lead or pull the owner. To achieve voice control over the dog, he should not feel tension on the leash at all. When the leash is used as a correction tool it should be in the form of a **sharp “pop”** and **immediate release** to be effective. A tight leash being pulled is punishment to a dog, not a correction. Dogs must be taught **self-control**! They must not be manhandled with a leash or bribed with food in order to get control over them.

The dog’s **body language** must be studied and must guide the owner’s response. The position of the tail, the ears, nose and forward leaning body posture must warn the owner to prevent an escalation of a situation. Body language tells us what our dog’s internal state of mind is. Early intervention is much easier than dealing with open aggression.
Quick action to redirect the dog’s attention must be taken. A “Come with me” command to lead the dog into the opposite direction away from a confrontation is called for if you want to play it safe. A reliable “Sit” on a loose leash should solve most situations. Make sure that you have a firm grip on the leash and a “NO SIT” command is repeated. Be careful not to physically stroke or pet a dog that still displays signs of agitation. The dog may interpret it as approval from its owner for its behaviour.

Quite often leash aggression is caused by owners who drag their dog to, “Say Hi” to your dog. Charging into another dog’s face is very rude behaviour in the animal world. It is likened to a complete stranger coming up to you to hug and kiss you. I regularly have to protect my dog from these well-intentioned people.
Fortunately most dog fights can be prevented with obedience training. You do not want your dog to have a bad label attached to him. It is up to the owners to go to the trouble of teaching puppies **bite inhibition** and make sure you gain **voice control** over your dog and the dog must exercise **self-control**!

Picture: Humane Society of the United States lecture notes.
PART THREE

“Basic Obedience Training”
Introduction .................................................................................. 217

1. Bonding .................................................................................. 219
2. Training Equipment: .............................................................. 222
3. Basic Training Rules .............................................................. 230
4. “Come” .................................................................................. 237
5. ‘Sit—Stay’ ............................................................................. 243
6. Walk, Walkies, Heeling .......................................................... 251
7. Heeling ................................................................................... 254
8. Heel Exercises ........................................................................ 259
9. ‘Down—Stay’ ......................................................................... 260
10. “My dog does it perfectly at Home.” .................................... 267
11. Retrieve Imprinting ............................................................... 271
It is the responsibility of all dog owners to ensure that their dogs are properly trained: John Fisher

“Properly trained” could mean something different to each dog owner.

One question on our club entry form reads: What do you expect from training? Although the answers differ somewhat from, “Obedience” to “Well behaved,” there is nevertheless, overall a general desire to be in control of the dog at home and on walks. This can amount to the following: coming when called, not pulling on the leash, sitting and down on command and the stays.

What these owners all have in common is that they need to have voice control over their dogs.

In order to achieve these aims we need to create a desire in the dog to want to obey and bond with its owner otherwise it will not be keen to come when called. Bonding must therefore form an important part of obedience training.

We do not have to teach a dog to sit but to, “Sit” when told to do so and stay sitting until given another—or a release command. When going for a walk near traffic you want your dog to, “Pay attention” and be close to you so you want your dog to, “Heel.” Basic obedience training then invariably must include; bonding, a reliable sit and down, coming when called and heeling as well as some retrieve exercises.
We do not know what potential we unlock when we obedience train our dogs!

Lindy Croxford, one of our club members, out shopping one morning came across a dirty little waif outside a shopping centre. Being an animal lover, she took him home when told that he had been there for some time and they wanted the SPCA to take him away. He was named Shenzi, a Swahili word for rough and a bit tatty. After some time Shenzi joined the other dogs for some obedience training at the club. At the end of the year he passed his Canine Good Citizen Bronze test and with Lindy’s persistence became an enthusiastic retriever. This meant that he could enter for obedience competitions and won many prizes in his grades as he moved up. He even represented our club in team competitions winning the regional prize twice. In 2009 Shenzi was chosen as the SPCA’s Mutt of the Year and represented the organization at many functions. He was spotted by an animal-casting agent and has been involved in a number of commercial shoots. As a PAT (Pets As Therapy) dog he is loved by the patients and he also performed with confidence in “Annie” the stage production. Shenzi has since passed his Canine Good Citizen Gold test and is proof that obedience training can unleash great potential in a dog.

The exercises in the articles that follow are all easily within the capabilities of the average family dog. It is a great pity then that many dog owners do not make the effort to obedience train their dogs and experience the joy and pride in watching them achieve, much as they did with their own children.
BONDING

Successful dog training requires sound bonding between you and your dog. But, like at home, you need to work at strengthening and maintaining this relationship that requires amongst others:

**Establishing and maintaining your leadership position.**
A kind, consistent, firm leadership is required for the dog to respect you, want to bond with you and please you such as **spending quality time together.** This entails **rituals** that you and your dog can look forward to. When going shopping, I only have to say, “OK Guys” and the dogs will rush off and jump into to LDV because they know that while mom does the shopping, we play on the common nearby. Coyote carries the newspaper from the shop and they look forward to the routine of receiving their “thank you” treats afterwards.

**Communication** There are **four** basic ways in which dogs communicate with each other and with us. **Body language, vocal intonation and voice inflection, touch and scent.** Dogs do not understand language the way we do. Use a happy, high inflection for praise and a deep voice when you disapprove of behaviour. If you want your dog to hurry to you, rapidly repeat the word: “Come-come-come” in a higher pitch tone. If you want to slow or calm your dog, say “Waa-a-i-i-t” or “sloo-o-w” stretched out.

Bonding with your dog by **touch** requires that you spend time grooming and really loving the dog. Show the dog often that you **care** for it. Do it on a daily basis if possible. Hand feeding
at least once a day is recommended. Before going to bed at night, I hand feed a treat to my dogs and the kittens that are awake.

**How?**

Start by having your dog standing or sitting close to you on your left hand side. Placing your left hand over the back of the dog, gently start stroking the dog’s left side from the collar to the back leg while repeating, “**Good girl**” or “**That’s nice.**” *Over time the dog begins to associate your left side as the “loving” side and will automatically come to that side when catching up to you on a walk or when heeling on a pavement or when in traffic.*

With the dog standing or sitting next to you and with the dog’s lead in your **right hand** turn to your right and say, “**Come with me**” as you gently tug and lead the dog in a circle of no more than about 3 meters wide around you while it walks with you. *By turning to your right you remain ahead of the dog that must follow and catch up to you.*

Now suddenly stop after one circle, draw the dog close to your left side i.e. in the “Heel” position and with your left hand over the dog’s back, **slowly stroke the dog’s side** a few times from **behind the collar to the hind leg**, while at the same time repeating, “**That’s nice, that’s fine**” in a soothing voice.

Then, repeat the same procedure at least 5 times; “**Come with me**” leading the dog in a circle around you, **stopping** and **stroking** while you repeat, “**That’s good**” etc.
Every time your dog is near you, stroke its side and say the soothing, “Good dog.” Do the same when you groom the dog or in the case of a puppy, while it is eating. Constantly tell it, “That’s good” while you slowly stroke the dog’s side from behind the collar to the back of the elbow on the hind leg.

After stroking for a while, gently guide the dog into your arms for ½ of a second i.e. just enough time for a quick hug and to stroke its side once only, then just say, “That’s good” and let the dog run off or play “Tuggy.”

Your aim here is to get your dog to feel comfortable coming into your arms. When this has been achieved you will bond closely with your dog and find it a lot easier to get your dog to focus on the “work” you are going to do together.

I use the words, “Come with me” as a command and not a request. When my dog, doing man work in Shutzhund protection exercises, returns with the sleeve he has taken as prey from the helper, I say,” Come with me” as I turn to my right and Quanto joins my left side before being calmed and releasing the sleeve in order to have another bite.
TRAINING EQUIPMENT:

All good trainers will ensure that they have the correct and good quality training equipment before attempting to train a dog. What is important is that the correct instrument is used to solve a particular problem as it is encountered.

The Leash/Lead:

Medium to large dogs should have either leather or cotton webbing leads that must be at least 750mm long.

Nylon is suited for small dogs. Chain leads are painful on hands and useless for training but can be used for dogs that chew their leads. For training purposes the **5m and 10m long leads/lines** are essential as well as the short Tab-leash for off-leash control.

The Tab Leash:

The Tab consists of a short (200mm) leash that does not drag on the ground but enables the trainer to gain control over the dog when he is free. A Tab leash can easily be made at home.

Collars:

*All dogs must wear a training collar, which fits only the dog’s neck, and which must remain on the dog at all times. For competition purposes: “Nothing (e.g. medals) may be attached to the collar except a lead when told to do so.”*
Collars are needed to properly control the dog and to assist in preventing bad habits such as refusing to come, running away, biting etc. This does not imply in any way that pain is inflicted. **Abuse can never be regarded as proper training**. A pup must not be spanked or scolded for anything that he does not understand or has been taught.

Before deciding on which collar to use, it is important to understand the correct use of the different collars i.e. how they are applied to administer a proper communication with the dog. Most handlers, in spite of demonstrations and instructions, never seem to be able to master the **proper leash/collar technique**.

The message to correct or initiate behaviour starts in the handler’s brain and moves quickly along his arm to the hand and wrist that is connected to the dog’s lead and collar. The **wrist and hand** must make a **quick snap and release action** for the “message” to continue to the dog. It is not a pull with the arm, but rather a small “**pop**” of the wrist. This means that the lead must have the **correct slackness** for the “pop” to be communicated to the collar.

A lead that is too tight will only result in a pulling sensation and the dog will not be able to connect the “pop” with the behaviour for which it is being corrected. **The collar must be fitted so that the correction is felt in the dog’s neck for a split second only and at the right moment**. Too much slack will not pass the message on at all or may be too late. **Fitted properly, and used correctly, all collars can be effective**.

Here are some advantages and disadvantages of the different collars.
The Buckle/Fixed Collar:

A flat buckle/fixed collar made of nylon or leather is ideal for puppies and smaller breed dogs for elementary or basic obedience training. It should be large enough to allow for growth. You should always be able to easily slide two fingers under the collar when it is properly fastened. It will take a few days for the dog to “forget” about the collar and ignore it. As the dog grows bigger and stronger there is a tendency for these collars to slip off over the head with the result that the dog can run away and be injured.

Instructors can advise on the correct collar for the dog.

The Choke/Check Chain or Slip Collar:

This is the most popular collar used in this country yet is possibly the most difficult to use correctly. It may take a couple of months to learn the proper technique. Most trainers find it very difficult to communicate effectively with their dogs using the choke chain.

Properly fitted the live ring, which is at the end of the chain that passes over the dog’s neck and is attached to the leash, should not extend past the dead ring, which comes from below the neck, by more than 25-30mm(1-2 inches) or so, otherwise it will be too slack to effect proper communication with the dog.

The communication with a choke chain comes from a quick constriction on the dog’s throat followed by an immediate release. This means that the leash must always be at the proper tension for the “pop” action of the wrist to have effect. When
the chain is tightened and released, the links make a noise and the dog will soon respond to that sound. (Remember, if a dog can hear a grasshopper chew he can also hear the links tightening.) “Checking,” in fact, means tightening and releasing the lead in quick succession, always leaving the dog with a loose lead.

The slip collar/choke chain must be fitted the correct way otherwise it will not automatically slacken off after a “pop.”

Many dog trainers are of the opinion that the choke chain is more humane than other training collars. However, if fitted incorrectly, the sawing action and incorrect use of the choke chain can cause pain and serious injury to a dog’s throat and wear away the hair around the neck. The long link collar or “fur saver” is recommended for dogs with a longer coat. They have an added advantage in that they can be dead tied by putting the catch back onto a link and it is now no longer able to choke the dog. This is useful in some Shutzhund exercises where the dog is encouraged to pull without being choked. The use of ineffectual corrections may lead to the dog building up a resistance to it with the result that greater force is required than may be needed.

The Halti:

The Halti operates much the same as a horse halter in that it works from the dog’s head (muzzle and face area) and provides much greater control than neck collars. Many dogs take some time getting used to it because it is not natural for dogs to have something around their mouths. Halties work if used properly. However, it is important to remember that for security reasons
the Halti must always be used with another collar in case it comes off.

**The Halti is recommended** for handlers having difficulty gaining control over the dog with other collars. It is ideal for cases where the dog is stronger than the handler, such as child handlers or small, frail, handicapped or pregnant handlers. It is also very effective for control over aggressive, hyperactive or easily distracted dogs. *My personal concern is that I often come across people who swear by how effective they find the halti and the poor dog then has to wear it for the rest of its life.*

**The Halti is not** a muzzle and is not allowed in the obedience ring and does not fit well on short-faced dogs such as Pugs, Bulldogs and Staffies etc.

**The Training Harness: “Walk Rite”**

This training harness, when fitted fully, is a kind method of control which counteracts any tendency to pull or lunge and teaches the dog controlled and relaxed walking.

The stop lines that are attached to the collar and pass down behind the dog’s legs and up the front of the chest can be removed. In this way the dog can be gradually weaned off the stop lines and walk correctly with collar and lead only.

*It must always be remembered that all of the above are training tools that are removed after training. Your aim must be VOICE control over your dog and NOT leash control!*
The Training/Pinch/Prong Collar

Correctly fitted with fingers under prong

This collar consists of a band of interlocking sections that have short blunt ends. These prongs are not spikes and do not dig into the dog’s skin. It is criticized more for its looks, yet if fitted correctly; it is possibly a better training collar because it requires less force on the lead to effect a correction. The prongs are designed to produce a pinch and not to puncture but to act more like the way the mother dog corrects her pups by giving them a quick, startling nip in the neck.

This collar is wider, has limited constriction and with the shortness of the stubs, is not likely to injure the dog. Due to the fact that it exerts pressure or pinch all-round the neck, it has been called “power steering” because it takes only a slight “pop” of the wrist to get a proper correction.
The pinch collar is fitted high on the dog’s neck, just behind the ears. It should be tight enough so that the fingers can just get under the prongs. A collar that is too loose will slide down the neck and then can hurt the dog.

The pinch collar is not used on small, lightweight or friendly dog. It should also not be used by an uninformed trainer.

Corrections are usually communicated to the dog more effectively with less risk of injury because trainers using this collar learn how to administer a correction that does not require force to bring about the desired behaviour in the dog. With this collar a small person with a large unruly dog will be better able to control him. If your dog is a dog fighter this collar may help to break the habit.

In the beginning the dog should wear the training collar at least an hour before training to allow the dog to “forget” about it otherwise he becomes clever and works well only when he wears the collar and is called being “collar-smart.”

The training collar must not be left on an unsupervised dog because it can get hooked on a gate or fence etc. Remove the collar after training and when you leave home.

The collar can also be fitted inside out so that the prongs face away from the dog.

The object of training is communication with your dog! Beginner trainers are inclined to continue pulling on the leash when they use this collar. This is a wrong because the collar was designed for a “pop” and release action that will
help the dog to understand what the handler wants. It is not to enforce your will on the dog!!!!

The pinch collar is not allowed in shows or obedience competitions and is a reason why many trainers do not want to use it. Some regard it as a clumsy implement and do not like its “springy-clingy” feel on the dog’s neck.

Please read my article: “Timing a Correction.”

The Dumbbell:

The dumbbell is made of wood or solid plastic and must be shaped like a dumbbell. The weight/mass and size of the dumbbell may vary with the size of the dog.
BASIC TRAINING RULES

Never correct or scold your dog after calling him to you or punish him after he has done wrong!

Join a club and do not allow your dog to play or interfere with other dogs in training.

Play with and exercise your dog every day.

Be patient! Never lose your temper! Never use violent tugs or slaps or kicks to punish your dog! Remember, you are going to have fun with your dog. If either you or your dog is frustrated, take a break and try again later.

Make sure that you understand what you want to teach your dog before starting an exercise.

Pick up after your dog.

In all dog training there are some basic phases you must go through to organise your training properly:

1 Response to a verbal command or hand signal

In order to get a reliable response from a verbal or non-verbal command we must first:

Teach him what he is expected to know and reward him for doing it right! No feedback = You can do what you like. There is no point in telling a dog to do something and
not to follow through and either insist on obedience or helping the dog to get it right.

Help him as much as possible to learn that particular step. *Dogs are not mind readers; they do not know what you want.*

Make it as easy as possible for the dog. *Teach him in an area where there are fewer distractions.*

During this phase the dog is **never corrected for not performing.** *Withholding rewards should tell the dog whether the response is right or wrong.*

## 2 Correction and Rewards

A correction is an act—*a sharp tug and immediate release*—you take when you tell your dog to, “**stop doing what you are doing**” and “**pay attention**”. The dog’s name means, “**pay attention**” so your first action will be to call your dog’s name and reward/praise any attention given to you by looking at your face. It may be necessary to capture an inattentive dog’s attention by passing a tasty tidbit past his nose and drawing his gaze towards your face as you say, “**Watch me!**” It is what we called, “Fetching the nose.” Young dogs are easily distracted and a “pop” on the leash or clapping your hands may help to regain attention. Later it may happen that the dog refuses to obey a command **that you know he definitely understands** then a correction “pop” will tell him that he is going to have to obey whether he likes it or not. *Experience will teach you how strong a correction should be to regain the attention of your dog.* *Withdrawing your love, even for a short while, by saying, “Too bad” and turning away from him should serve as*
a correction! No anger, no frustration, just a simple rule: **Obey commands and you will get the treats you like. Don’t obey and you don’t get them. Dog’s choice!**

Corrections must be **effective**, not harsh. They should be **instructive, immediate** and **consistent**. The dog **must always** be warned **beforehand**, so that he has an opportunity to avoid the correction by doing what he has been taught to do previously. “Effective” means that the dog does not have to be punished repeatedly for the same thing otherwise it is abuse. If it is not working, try something else. Stop and consult your instructor. **Punishment by kicking a dog can ruin a dog’s temperament and its relationship with its owner permanently.**

**Insistence is the key to training** The dog must comply within 2 seconds otherwise the command is repeated in a calm but insistent voice, followed by, “Good dog” after compliance and an immediate repeat of the exercise. The dog must give you his undivided attention and perform promptly and willingly after a single request to be followed by praise, treat and play (release).

It is important to remember and accept that we cannot get dogs to think back and recall what happened in the past, even a few seconds or a minute ago. Owners may call their reaction “guilt,” but dogs do not identify with this human response. They will only be scared and confused by ill-timed corrections and punishment. If a dog is **corrected immediately** after he has done wrong, he will begin to understand. **Delayed punishment does not work**, no matter how “guilty” the dog may have looked. Punishment, in the case of dogs, applies only for what has happened immediately before the event. When the owner returns home and sees a hole in the garden...
and he punishes the dog when it comes to greet him, the dog will understand that he has been punished for coming to greet his owner and not be aware that the punishment was intended for digging in the wrong place. The dog will quickly become shy of the owner and begin to avoid him. Breaking a “Stay” command must be corrected just as the dog begins to move, not when he is halfway to his owner and looking at a bird. He may then think that the punishment is for looking at the bird. **Try not to give your dog an opportunity to misbehave because then you never have to punish him.**

**Verbal reprimands** are more effective than physical corrections. They can be given at a distance and can be administered instantaneously. “Ugh,” “Sit,” “Down,” “Shush” etc. tells the dog that he is about to do something wrong and will be corrected if he does not correct himself. By having avoided a correction the dog can actually be praised. It is the **tone** of voice and its **volume** that reprimands the dog. However, stopping a dog from doing something wrong does not teach it what it should have done. That is why the instruction **immediately after** the correction is so very important since it informs the dog of what was expected from him so that he can be praised. **Beginner trainers are inclined to give a pop correction at the same moment as they give a verbal reprimand with the result that the dog reacts to the physical correction and not the verbal one. Only when the dog does not react to the voice command should the pop correction be applied.**

**Avoidance training** is far more effective than punishment training. Dogs must, as far as possible, be given an opportunity to avoid a correction by reminding them of previous training and what is expected from them. For example, when visitors arrive and the dog is looking forward to greeting them, he
should be given a “Sit” command in order to avoid jumping-up behaviour. Punishing a dog for some wrong doing does not teach it how to avoid it in future. When the dog barks for too long, a “Shush” or clapping of the hands should precede any physical contact with the animal.

**Consistency** means that the dog must be corrected verbally or physically or both *each and every time* it misbehaves. If the dog is corrected each time at the club and not at home, he becomes a situation or location misbehaviour, similar to owner-absent misbehaviour.

**Rewards** after correct behaviour may take many different forms and must be carefully considered. When a dog has been asked to do something, it must be rewarded the moment it has complied. By using food, praise and stroking the dog in the beginning, a powerful message is sent to the dog to repeat the behaviour requested. Good behaviour is rewarded with food and affection while undesirable behaviour is corrected. For most dogs food is a very powerful reward especially if it is food that the dog particularly likes. *Using food is not bribery because the dog first has to perform the required movements before he receives it.* In the same way as a child is taught to say, “Please” before getting something, a dog can be taught to come and heel next to the owner.

Once a dog has, with the aid of food rewards, learnt a particular behaviour, the food reward is immediately reduced to 50% and then only given *intermittently*, but is reserved for the better and faster compliance. **Beginner trainers also make the mistake of rewarding the dog every time it performs the same behaviour.** The dog must know that he will be rewarded but need not know exactly when. This
creates **anticipation** which in turn produces **concentration** by the dog. This will produce and maintain an eager and reliable performer. Repeated, expected rewards are not only boring but the owner’s control over the dog becomes reward-dependent. The dog may stop responding when it does not get a reward or if it knows that the owner does not have food available.

### 3 Proofing:

Proofing means that the stage is reached when we strengthen or increase the **reliability of the dog’s response**. We need to make sure that the dog follows the commands **immediately** and **first time** no matter what happens around it.

- We add ever stronger distractions.
- Change location and surfaces, time of day, weather etc.
- Move further away from the dog.
- Vary commands and signals, withholding rewards etc.

**Three time rule:**

This means, if the dog seems to be guessing and makes a mistake during the Proofing phase the dog gets an **automatic help** or correction on the **next three attempts** at the same exercise. *(If he refuses to “Come” when commanded, he will automatically be popped or tugged towards you the next 3 times he is called.)*

After 3 automatic corrections, the learning process is again tested by giving the next command **without** an automatic correction.
If the dog makes the mistake again he gets 3 automatic corrections again before he is tested again.

**Repetitions:** Dogs learn by repetition and it is estimated that an activity must be repeated at least thirty times before the dog has mastered it.

1. Practise a new exercise at least times in a session.
2. Do 5 rep/sessions **daily** if possible.
3. Do **not** go on to the next exercise until your dog can do the exercise 5 times without the need for a correction.
Basic command training steps.

Training rule: Never correct your dog after calling him to you!

If he deserves a correction, go to him and then give the correction. “Stop doing what you are doing!”

Step 1 Teaching the meaning of “Come” with food:

The aim here is for an immediate response from the dog and at the same time to make it a pleasurable experience for him. At home, on walks etc. always have food handy to reward your dog when he comes to you; make a big fuss, “Good come”, and “Good dog”.

In an enclosed area two or more family members can take turns calling the pup (or untrained dog) back and forth. Sit or bend down when you call the dog.

It is important that the dog associates the word “Come” with something good such as food or hugs. Dogs soon learn that when they respond to “Come” a leash is attached to them and their freedom ends, so they become reluctant to come to the owner. So, call the dog, praise, hug and treat and send him to play some more before you call again. When the puppy or dog comes perfectly every time, the food treats or tug games are gradually reduced to about half the time. Treats
are now reserved for the best efforts. When he starts reacting consistently to the word, “Come”, we go on to the next step.

**Step 2 Back up on “Come” command:**

We make use of the natural instinct of the young dog to follow moving objects. Wait for him to become distracted. Call him and then run backwards while you continue to call “Come, come, come.” and treat, “Good dog” etc.

* **NO SITTING:** We want him to come in fast. That is why we back up! Sit will only slow him down.

* **NO CORRECTIONS:** If he does not come do not correct him. *Teach him that failure to comply ends the fun you are having.* You must be very sure that he knows the “Come” command before you correct him. A correction—a sharp “pop” and release—is something that signals to the dog that he must *stop doing what he is doing.* Punishment like yanking the chain on the dog without a warning to give the dog a chance to avoid the correction will only negatively influence the willingness of the dog to work at all. People who rely on punishment to train their dogs take months if not years longer to teach the same thing. *Withdrawing your love, even for a short while should be enough punishment for your dog.* *FOOD* must only be given when you call him and he comes to you. Gradually phase out food by only rewarding the best efforts.

The word ‘**SIT**” can be introduced when the dog enjoys the game.

Try to practise these exercises in at least three or four different locations.
Step 3 Formal “Come” training:

Give a “Sit St-a-ay” command. Move to 3-4 paces in front of the dog. Call, “Come” followed by an automatic pop on the leash, and back-up (i.e. run backwards). Food and enthusiastic praise must be given when he gets to you. Make very sure that the “pop” is given immediately after the “come” command i.e. before he comes to you.

The dog will try to beat the automatic pop and jump forward towards you.

Step 4 Eliminate back-ups when you have good speed:

The reason for speed in coming is to eliminate distractions on the way. When good speed is achieved discontinue back-ups and add, “Sit” when he is a few paces from you. Make the sit period very short. Lots of praise must be given for good speed.

If you see the dog slowing down, continue with back-ups again. *I use a ball on a string to get Quanto to come to me with speed. When he is quite close to me I throw the ball through between my legs and he passes between my legs in a hurry to get to the ball. Repeat until your dog rushes at you when you say, “Come.”*

Step 5: Add distractions.

Now distractions are very important. Think of distractions that you may add e.g.: Give a good “Stay”, then:

1. Noise before “Come” call, e.g. someone claps hands.
2 Move about before calling the dog.
3 Talking to the dog,” Are you ready?” Make him excited to rush forward.
4 A distracter rolls a ball, shows the dog the tug toy or that he has liver treats etc. **The dog must learn that the only way to get these rewards is to obey the handler.**

Obedience classes provide the best distractions because of all the dogs and handlers nearby.

If the dog anticipates the command by coming before being called, do not charge him but say, “No,” reel him in and gently “reverse” him to the starting position. **In the very beginning it may be better to just ignore the dog and teach him that coming before being called has no rewards.**

**Step 6 Random recall with long line. Discontinue food:**

Continue the exercise as before but now let him drag the long line. Never let the dog drag the long line unattended. It may be caught in places that could harm him.

Let him wander around for a while. Get hold of the line before calling him. Pop or reel him in if necessary. **The secret is to make the pop quite “sharp” and the dog will immediately rush to you for enthusiastic praise and reward.**

Do not go off leash too soon. Most beginners make the mistake of going off-leash before the dog *listens to their voices.*
Step 7 Off leash:

When he consistently performs on the long line it is time to go off leash.

Give a “Down stay” and practise random recalls. Place obstacles in the way for him to go around. E.g. a box, chairs, another dog lying in the way, and move around a corner . . . . etc.

*Learn to read your dog. Watch him very closely and try to avoid mistakes. Always first consider if the mistake made by the dog is not your fault. Maybe you missed something.*

If the dog makes mistakes go back to on-leash work.

What is important is to realise that if I am responsible for teaching my dog to “come”, it is my job to convince my dog that he must come every time I call him. If the dog realises that he need only come after a few calls or when your voice sounds angry enough he is never going to be reliable. Also **never give a command that you cannot enforce**, until you are confident that he will respond immediately no matter what is happening around him.

Your dog should now be ready for more advanced work and should make you proud of him.

**AREA of INFLUANCE**

Dogs know that when they are 5 paces away from the handler, “You can’t catch me!”
Nearer than that they can feel the presence of the trainer and will most likely come when called. That is why it is important to know the limits of your area of influence over your dog.

*Older dogs and some Rescue dogs that have not been trained as puppies to come when called and/or have been running free for some time may need a different approach to getting them to come on command. They need to understand that they cannot escape the handler and avoid a correction. At the same time the handler’s area of influence is increased.*

Several different lengths of light nylon line must be used. A shorter 1.5m line should at first be worn anytime the dog is with the handler, including eating, playing, riding in the car, training etc. The dog must become very aware of the fact that the handler has control of him at all times. The longer lines must be used when the dog is beginning to move further away. The idea is for the handler to be able to get to the line if the dog wants to escape. The handler can step onto the line and instantly halt the disobedience.

What is very important is that the dog must not be called unless it is wearing the line. A verbal command must always be given first so that the dog learns to connect the handler’s call and the correction that will follow if it refuses to obey immediately and be aware that it cannot escape the correction.
‘SIT—STAY’
Basic command broken into small component parts to be mastered by the dog.

Start dog training in a quiet area away from too many distractions. *(If your dog already has done some obedience training, a clicker can be used to pinpoint correct behaviour instead of the verbal “Good dog, Good sit.”)*

1 Meaning of word “Sit”: With treat open at first and then in fist: The dog’s sense of smell will tell him about the treat in the fist.

Let the dog briefly sniff the treat and then slowly move it upwards between the eyes and over the dog’s head. This should have the dog sitting down naturally. *Most dogs will automatically lift their heads to get the food and then sit down.* Reward immediately with the treat in your hand. *If the dog is inclined to walk backwards, continue to follow it, with the food held just over the head, until it sits.*

Repeat this exercise a few times and once you have captured the sit position accurately, you can introduce the command, “J . . SIT” and praise “Yes”—“Good Dog,” feed reward, “Good sit.” *(Click/“Yes” and treat the moment the dog reaches a sitting position.)*

Use a happy but firm voice command! Since the dog’s name also means “pay attention” it should always be used before commands.
Repeat 10-15 times 2-5 times a day, or as often as possible, until he can do it without fail. After 6 or more successful sits the food disappears into the fist and then as soon as possible thereafter the use of food to capture a sitting position must be replaced by the **hand signal**.

*The reason why the treat is soon kept invisible in the hand is because we want the dog to respond to the hand signal.*

2 **Voice and hand signals**

Continue the same exercise but now hide the food/treat behind your **back** or in **pocket**. Your empty hand’s **movement now becomes a signal to sit**. The sit hand signal is an upward twist of the wrist with the index finger pointing upwards. This movement must be aimed to get the dog’s head up because then the hindquarters will most likely go down and the dog will sit.

The dog must learn to respond to **voice and hand** signals (Simultaneously) and not only obey when you have food in your hand. After rewarding each time in the beginning, you now start rewarding only the better sits.

When the dog will sit enthusiastically most of the time, place both hands behind your back and command, “C—, *Sit.*” (No hand signal). Treat if the dog sits. In some cases you will have to wait a while before he responds. Reward and praise enthusiastically because he now knows what to do when commanded to “**Sit.**” Now the word “Sit” always goes first in the sequence which is as follows: 1) **Verbal command, “Sit.”** 2) **Hand signal** 3) dog sits 4) Click or
“Yes” 5) reward. Repeat by rewarding good responses to verbal commands with food and then gradually reduce the treats to about half the time.

Treats should in future be used to build new or more correct behaviour!

Remember to give the “OK”/“FREE”/“OFF YOU GO”/“TAKE A BREAK” etc. release command after short training sessions!! (The clicker indicates the end of an activity and that the dog is free to play.)

Stop as soon as the dog loses interest. Play a while and restart.

Sitting must become part of the dog’s lifestyle! The dog must “Sit” before putting on the leash; before opening the door; before throwing the ball, taking the ball, greeting people, before eating etc., etc. Making the dog “Sit” frequently during “walkies” stops the inclination to pull on the leash and the “OK” becomes an enjoyable response for the dog.

3 Staying

Get the dog to sit next to you in the heel position. Hold the leash loosely in your left hand and straight up above the dog’s head. Give the command: “J—, Sit St-a-a-aay” and at the same time briefly pass the open palm of your right hand in front of the dog’s eyes in an upward scoop (The hand signal to stay). With the left hand, holding the leash directly above the dog’s head, give tiny, rhythmic, upward tugs which will maintain gentle upward pulling
on the leash and will prevent the dog from standing. *For the dog to stand again the head has to go down and the hindquarters must rise. That is why we keep the head up.* Count 5 seconds, “*Good dog,*” “*Good stay.*”

Since the clicker is an “*end of exercise*” signal, *withholding the click* in fact turns “*sit*” into “*stay.*” The absence of a click indicates how long the dog must sit before a treat is given.

Repeat 5 times a day. Extend the time gradually by 10 to 15 seconds at a time: 5-20-35-50 etc.

4 **Phasenot food**

Continue the same exercise but now hide the food/treat behind your back or preferably in the mouth so that the dog can look at your face. Only use a treat to build correct behaviour. The dog now knows what to do when commanded to “*Sit St-a-a-aay*”. Extend time gradually by 15 seconds at a time e.g. 5-20-35-50 etc.

*After many good sits continue to the next exercise.*

4 **Walk around the dog:** When the dog will remain sitting for up to a minute, it is time to slowly start walking around him. Give a *Stay* command and *hand signal* and stepping off on the *right* leg, slowly walking around the dog whilst, at the same time continuing the rhythmic tugs with the left hand as before. C/T, Praise!!! *Any attempt by the dog to stand or follow you must immediately be met with a deep reprimand, “*Bah*” or “*Bad*” or “*No*” (Short one-word command).*
5 “Bungee” stays: When you are able to walk around your dog a few times without him trying to get up, the next stage can be attempted. *Pretend that there is an elastic or bungee rope attached between you and your dog.* Give a *Sit/St-a-a-aay* command, step off on your right leg and leave your dog only to be “pulled back” after a pace or two by the “bungee.” C/T. *During the first week you should not move more than five paces away from the dog. The aim here is to build confidence in the dog that you will return each time. In the beginning it is necessary to keep your eye on the dog so that the slightest movement to follow is immediately met with, “*Bah*” or “*Bad.*”*

6 Distractions now added. This is the difference between a well-trained dog and a poorly trained dog!

The tiny rhythmic tugs can now be used to test the dog’s understanding and compliance by gently tugging or pulling the leash *towards you.* Any forward movement by the dog is met with an immediate, “*No*” and the dog is “*reversed*” backwards to the original position.

Distractions could take the form of a person or dog nearby or a ball bounced or training in a new location on different surfaces etc.

The level of distraction is gradually increased and corrections are given for not performing. Enthusiastic praise for good work!!

When your dog is stable with distractions go on to add distance.
7 Add distance: Repeat the exercise but now make use of longer lines to place distance between handler and dog. 3m-5m-10m etc.

Gradually increase the distance and the time. E.g. 10sec, 15sec, 20sec etc. for every 2 metres away from the dog. Use distractions. When a stay is broken, “reverse” him back to the original position, give a firm correction then praise when he complies.

DO NOT CHARGE THE DOG TO CORRECT him, he will only become confused.

Rather reel him in and “reverse” him to the original position. Make him walk backwards.

8 Off leash: As above. But when handler is 5 or more metres away, leave the rope on the ground and slowly walk a bit further away. Take a step to the right, left; sit down, clap hands etc. “Good dog” “good sit”. Repeat until stable under distractions.

9 Reduce length of leash: Repeat the exercise as above but now gradually reduce the length of the leash to 2m-1m-300mm. The dog must still feel something around his neck.

10 Random sit: Now the sit exercise is not part of formal training, but can be in the yard, in the street, at the shop etc. Expect an immediate response!!! Correct and praise.
You should now have a pet that is a pleasure to live with. Competition work will lead to stays out of sight for up to 10 minutes.

**Remember: Length of TIME before DISTRACTIONS before DISTANCE away from the dog.**

Review these steps before each training session!

Repeat often in different locations and on different surfaces.

Be consistent and insistent; do things the same way i.e. commands, corrections and praise and make sure that your commands are obeyed.

Test to see to what extent your dog has understood by giving the “sit” command while you are sitting down, standing behind the dog, standing on a chair or ladder or lying down etc.

**Problem solving:** Some dogs suffer from separation anxiety and become traumatized when their owners leave them alone, especially at a strange place.

**The following may be helpful:**

Secure the dog to a fence or pole so that it cannot follow you. Give a Sit/Stay command and proceed as above by leaving the dog and returning very shortly. Praise the dog in a happy voice and treat for “staying” even if he had no choice in doing so. Be very patient and repeat often. Next repeat the same procedure at different locations. **Do not be in a hurry to “test” the dog’s staying ability too soon.** After a while it might be noticed that the dog’s lead has remained slack while you were away. This
may be an indication that the time to untie the dog is nearing. When off leash, repeat the exercises from Step 5.

TIMING is very important: Handlers often make the mistake of getting cross with their dogs when they come to them after having broken the stay command. This teaches the dog that it is fine to break a stay but it is not fine to go to the handler. What must be done is to say, “Sit,” “No Sit” when you see it “thinking” about moving or following.
There is often much confusion about the concept and difference in training for these activities.

Dog owners know that their dogs need exercise and usually maintain a fairly set routine of taking them for walks. This often turns out to not be enjoyable for both because it becomes a struggle to control the dog or worse, the dogs become aggressive and start barking and lunging at people and dogs. Some owners get dragged along the route; dread the thought of meeting another dog or walking past the gate where other dogs are barking. Others expect the dog to “heel” when they are supposed to be relaxed and enjoy the outing.

I make a difference between Walk, Walkies and Heeling the dog.

Walking starts in the home and dogs usually get very excited when the leads are touched and tend to rush about. They become “deaf” to anything the owner may say. What is required is a calm start with self-control from the dog.

With the lead in full view, simply stand still and wait for the dog to calm down and sit. Alternatively sit down and start reading a magazine or paper and the dog soon gets the message. Praise a calm sit because sitting is the cue for more action. Clip on the lead and move towards the door where you again wait patiently until Bozo sits and looks at you. Now give a “Sit” command and enforce it so that you can pass through the door first to be followed by the dog. This is very important
because we are teaching the dog that from now onwards you are going to follow me and I am going to be very pleased with you. I find that by shutting the door as soon as the dog begins to move towards it, he soon realizes that trying to rush out is not going to work. At the gate the same ritual is followed. Close the gate once the dog once again sits calmly outside the property and the walk can begin.

**WALK:** When I “walk” my dog I shorten my leash to about 15 inches (40cms), move the collar or check chain to just below the ears and say, “Let’s go” and then stride out at a fairly fast but comfortable pace with my dog on a short but loose lead on my left side. The dog must remain next to or behind me. I do not allow my dog to smell, urinate or look about because the two of us are striding out on what is going to be a good physical exercise for both of us. Walking like this for a minimum of 5 to 10 minutes soon lets your dog get the message that we are walking as a team and are next to each other and there is no pulling involved. Remember to talk and encourage your dog especially in the beginning and also to maintain a loose lead after each small correction aimed at getting your dog to ignore distractions and rather to enjoy being with you. When passing a gate with barking dogs I simply say, “Leave” and continue at the same steady pace, not allowing any form of confrontation. Do not attempt to meet with strange dogs during the walk.

After a good walk we are ready for “Walkies.”

**WALKIES** is when my dog is on a longer or extended leash and allowed to smell all the messages other dogs have left along the route. My dog can now water every tree, walk ahead of me or fall behind while smelling. I am at a more relaxed pace and will even wait for my dogs to finish a good sniff.
where needed. Walkies should follow the WALK and can be up to 10 minutes in time. At this stage dogs can be given off leash freedom in a safe area.

Returning home requires much the same resolve as when you leave. Sit, wait, I go first, “OK” and the dogs follow. However, with Juno getting on in years I allow “walkies: as we near home. The dogs then go ahead and wait at the gate for me to open and allow them to follow. They rush to the laundry where their treats are kept and we conclude the walk with a pleasant ritual of being hand fed a special treat.

HEELING takes place during obedience competitions and when you and your dog are in traffic, on a pavement and crossing streets or roads. “Heel” simply means “hold that position” i.e. close to your left side and paying attention to your every move.
General

The main feature of the “Heel” exercise is the **ability of the dog to work with its handler as a team**. “Heel” means, “remain in this position.” The dog’s attention must be on the handler and he must not smell the ground as he would on a casual walk.

**Attention getting:**

The first thing you need to do before you can do any form of dog training is to get the **dog’s attention**. It is also the **most**
A Trained Dog is a Good Dog

difficult thing to achieve. A dog with poor concentration is one that looks around as he walks, sniffs at all sorts of things and generally gives the impression that he is not really interested in training. It is important that the dog be taught to concentrate and for that to happen the dog must be in a place where it will feel relaxed and there are no distractions at all! The ideal place would be indoors in a spare room or in the garage. Less favourable would be the garden or driveway. Worst place to train attention is the dog training club. However, that is the place where you learn about training methods for your dog and where you return for proofing and strengthening the reliability of the dog’s response. Repeated corrections for being distracted will soon create stress and resentment in any dog.

Rewards:

A reward is not a bribe because it is given in recognition of performance achieved and not in anticipation of it. A reward is anything a dog desires and for which he is prepared to work. Until a dog has learnt an exercise satisfactorily, he should be rewarded every time for all improvements he makes towards that exercise.

Step 1: Getting the dog to concentrate while you move.

Use food, to begin with. Pieces must be small enough to be hidden in your fist. Get the dog to sit on lead and: (1) Show him the tidbit in your hand and when those brown eyes lock onto the food, say, “Yes” in an excited tone of voice as you treat the dog. (2) Next introduce the “Watch” or “Watch me” command before giving the food. (3) Gently tug on the lead as you praise the dog for paying good attention. This teaches the dog that the lead can be associated with something pleasant.
and not to be seen as a correction for having done something wrong. (4) Start moving to the left and the right of the dog so that he has to turn his head as he follows your movements.

When all the food has been used, say, “Free!” or “OK!” and play with the dog. Repeat this exercise for about a week, long enough for the dog to become excited when you enter the training area.

**Step 2: Increase the concentration time and hide the treat**

Start the training sessions as before by giving the “Watch” command before giving the food. (1) Gradually increase concentration time by saying: “Good dog 1, good dog 2” etc. before rewarding. This can be extended up to ten seconds before giving the food. (2) Now also begin to conceal the tidbit in your fist. Praise excitedly when the dog concentrates even when he cannot see the food hidden in your hand. Always start by allowing him to see the first few pieces before hiding the rest. Continue the sessions until each session can be completed with full attention and no corrections are needed.

**Step 3: Concentration without food**

Start the training session with food visible then hidden in the fist and finally with the food in a pouch. Your aim is to keep him concentrating with your voice. The dog must happily pay attention even if he cannot see the food. Show him that both your hand are empty, praise him and then reward him from the pouch. If he now looks away, give him a correction, count three “Good dogs” and reward. Remember to continue to move backwards and sideways as before while the dog learns that you are allowed to move but he has to sit and
concentrate in order to earn a tidbit. What we do not want is for the dog to work beautifully and willingly as long as he can see the food or toy only to fall apart when it is removed or not allowed in competition. By rewarding intermittently we create anticipation which in turn produces concentration.

**Step 4: Attention in the sit**

Training can now be moved to a quiet corner in the garden or where more space is available for training heeling. Repeat the training that was done indoors with the dog sitting in front of you. The food is in your left hand above the dog’s head and the lead is in your right hand. Give the “Watch” command, praise the dog for concentration then give a “Free” or “OK” release and play for a bit. Repeat the same exercise but now gradually increase the concentration time up to half a minute or more before giving a release. Move as far as the lead will allow back and sideways on a loose lead. Vary the food from in view to out of sight. If the dog continues to concentrate without a treat or toy in sight for half a minute you are ready for the next step.

**Step 5: Attention at heel**

Have the dog sitting on lead in front of you and concentrating on the treat that is held in your left hand above his head, swivel round to position yourself next to the dog in the heel position. Say, “Heel” as you halt and the dog’s eyes are on you. Heel is a position that must be taught to the dog. At this stage of training you move into the heel position each time and the dog is simply expected to maintain eye-contact by watching your face. Hold that position for a few seconds and give a release command.
Step 6: Heeling

*I prefer the driveway for this part of training*. Start by getting the dog to sit in front of you, move into the heel position as was done previously and repeat, “Heel” as before, wait a few seconds while the dog is attending or repeat, “Watch me” if necessary, then repeat, “Heel” and step off on the left leg, take three steps and reward and play with your dog, “Come with me.” Repeat this exercise throughout the next week. Do not heel for more than a few paces each time and reward intermittently.

The exercises that follow are part of our club programme. Do not spend more than three minutes heeling at a session.
SUN VALLEY DOG TRAINING: Training Programme.

Heel Exercises:

1. **Starting to “Heel”:** Dog in sit position. Hold a short leash in the left hand pressed against the hip. Treat in right hand or between lips. Get dog’s attention. “Bozo, Heel” Step off on left leg, tug on leash, walk 3 paces. Halt on left leg. Treat /“Free” /play repeat 5 times.

2. **Straight-line heeling:** Left hand holds leash near catch. Treat in right hand. Get dog’s attention. “Bozo, Heel” Move slowly in straight line for 5-10 paces, halt and ‘reverse’ (i.e. walk backwards) call dog and when he comes round offer the treat, turn around and move together. Praise! “FREE” repeat.

3. **Wheel to the left:** (No sharp turns)

4. **Left wheels in a square:** Normal and fast pace.

5. **Wheel to the right:**

6. **Right wheels in a square:** Normal and fast pace.

7. **Right about turn:**

8. **Figure eight:**

Jan Meyer
Sun Valley Dog Training
‘DOWN—STAY’
Basic command broken into small component parts to be mastered by the dog.

The “Down” command is more difficult and is taught **after** the “**Sit**”. *(If your dog has already done some obedience training, a clicker can be used to pinpoint correct behaviour and instead of the verbal “**Good dog, Good down**.”)*

1 **Learn “Down” command: With food:** Start by getting the dog to sit next to you in the heel position.

Let the **sitting** dog smell the food in your **right fist**. Slowly move the treat down to the ground in front of the dog and between his front legs. Give the “**DOWN**” command and **at the same time** push the **hindquarters** of the dog **sideways (not down)** with your **left hand**. *(The trick is to push the dog’s **hip sideways** when his head is following the treat to the ground. The dog should easily lie down on one hip in a relaxed position from which he will not easily get up again)*

Release the food as soon as his **chest** touches the ground. (Click and Treat) “**Good dog**”, “**Good down**” etc.

Another method is to let the dog stand next to you and slowly bring a tasty treat down to a position between his front legs and hold it down in a closed fist. The dog will follow the treat with its nose and has to get down onto its elbows (play bow position) to try and get the treat. Hold the treat until his back goes down and then immediately
open your hand to release the treat. If he moves backwards, simply follow him by holding the treat between his front legs.

Repeat 5-10 times 2-3 times a day. The idea is to get the dog to drop down quickly. If he drops down before you can push him, go to step 2.

If the dog is unwilling to go down, place a chair or small table in front of him and by letting your right hand, holding the treat, move forward to a position under the chair you can entice the dog to keep his nose to the treat. Now, if the dog wants the treat, he must go down to get it from under the low chair. Problem solved. When outside, sit next to the dog in such a way that your right knee forms a “tunnel” through which you can slowly lure him to get to the treat. Repeat it a few times and then try it without the “tunnel.”

Be very patient. “Shadow”, a rescue dog in my club refused to go down for nearly two months. Having tried everything, I finally got him down with gentle downward pressure and immediately gave him “jackpot” i.e. all the food I had in my hand. Now Shadow drops like a brick on command.

The dog must learn that the best way to get the hand to open is to lie down. No work, no food.

Owners often complain that they have tried many methods but just cannot get their dogs to lay down or when they are down they will immediately get up again. What has happened is that by pushing the dog down in the
beginning, the dog has associated the word, “Down” with a struggle and an unpleasant experience. *Remember, if you pull a dog, it will pull back and if you push it, it will also push back.* The dog in fact may have learnt that, “down” means, “push up.” What needs to be done is to replace “down” with another word such as: “Flat” or “Platz” and offer a **very tasty treat** such as chicken, Vienna sausage or cheese (*Don’t go cheap on your dog!* under a low table, a few times a day, until to you obtain a pressure-less down.

2 **Eliminate giving food:** If the dog dives down regularly the hand signal replaces the food.

With a treat in the right hand, ask the dog to “*Sit*” and give a hand signal as before. C/T. Then give a “*Down*” followed by *sit—down—sit—down* and finally a *sit.* (Rewarding each time.) Now hide the food in your other hand or pocket and with the **empty hand** give a down signal to the **sitting** dog. *(Palm to the floor in a downwar d move is the hand signal for down)* Wait for the dog to react. “Jackpot” him if he lies down. If he stands up, say “Bah”, “Uh-uh”, “No” or “wrong” and give a sit command and put your hand on the ground as before.

The dog must now learn to respond to new **voice and hand** signals. Start rewarding only the better downs. When the dog is diving down enthusiastically, get him to *sit*, place both hands behind your back and command, “*J—, Down.*” *(No hand signal)* C/T if the dog downs. Jackpot!!

“*OK”*/“*FREE”*/“*OFF YOU GO”*/“TAKE A BREAK” release command after each 10 minutes work.
Continue as before but now vary the exercise with verbal command, hand signals and intermittent rewards. Gradually eliminate giving food by only rewarding at the end of the sequence: sit—down—sit—down (Reward).

3 **Down stay:** The aim here is for the dog to remain down while the handler is in an upright position.

Give the “Down” command and then when the dog is down, a **Down St-a-a-aay** command with a stay hand signal. (Open palm over the dog’s eyes). As soon as the dog is in the down position, step onto the leash close to the catch to prevent the dog from getting up again. *Wait a few seconds, before you bend over, stroke and praise and reward the dog on the ground. Count 15 and praise say “OK” click and treat so that the dog must hold the “down” position for several seconds*. Work up to 10 seconds down-stay while standing upright.

Repeat as before, but now take a step sideways and back before treating. Next move to the front and back again as in **Bungee** sit-stays. Later walk circles around the dog. *The message to the dog is to stay down even if the handler is moving. “Good dog” etc. Increase the length of time for the stay very gradually. If the dog gets up, say, “Bah”, “No” or “Wrong” and repeat the exercise. By stepping on the leash you can prevent the dog from getting up. Try to get 10-20 repetitions of this exercise. If the dog stands up after the click, give the treat. The click indicates the end of the behaviour and the dog does not have to hold the “down” any longer. It is recommended that a release command e.g. “OK” be given to end a stay because you*
do not necessarily want to reward each stay any more. Something you must do when you click.

Get into the habit of saying, “Sta-a-aay” only once.

4 **Add Distractions:** Tease the dog by touching the dog’s nose with the treat and hide it behind your back. If the dog moves to get the food, say, “Bah” or “NO” and repeat the “Down” command. This is very difficult for the dog because it is the opposite of what he has learnt before i.e. to follow the treat. Now, in order to earn the treat he must first **ignore** it. *Any attempt by the dog to return to the “down” position deserves enthusiastic praise, click and treat.*

**Use the same distractions and corrections as for the sit exercise.** E.g. Step over the dog. Let strangers pet the dog, drop the treat, etc. Corrections are done by grabbing the collar and gently pushing the dog **backwards** to the original position. *Dogs dislike having to walk backwards and soon avoid this by staying put.*

Phase out the clicker once the dog has mastered the distractions and replace it with verbal praise “Good dog” etc.

Now the dog should be taken to new locations to generalise this exercise. If the dog now breaks the stay, reduce the time for a few repetitions before gradually extending the time and distance.

5 **Long line work** now add distance between handler and dog in the same way as was done in the SIT exercise.
Gradually increase the distance away from the dog. For instance, move five or six paces away, wait a while before returning and walking around the dog each time before praise and treat. When the dog is stable at that distance, distract by sitting down, clapping hands or jumping up and down etc. Remember to first gradually increase the **time**, then the **distractions** and finally the **distance** away from the dog. Tug on the leash etc. If the dog breaks the stay, he must be “**reversed**” (*pushed backwards*) to the **original spot** where he was placed. Do not rush this part of the exercise by going off leash too soon otherwise the dog may never be reliable in the stay exercise.

6 **Off leash:** As above, but when the handler is 5m or more away from the dog, put the rope down and slowly walk further away, praising the dog, “Good stay”, “Good dog”. Step to the right, left etc. Move out of sight for brief periods e.g. behind a tree.

When the dog can hold the position confidently and will remain down even if a stranger steps over him and rolls a ball around him, it is again time to proof him in **different locations**.

7 **Reduce length of leash:** Repeat the exercise as before but now reduce the length of the leash to a “tab” leash of 200mm-300mm. The dog must still feel something around his neck and not be aware of the fact that he is free. *I find it useful to take my dogs to the entrance of the supermarket, give them a “**Down stay**” and then observe them through the glass from the inside, ready to step out and treat or correct.*
8 Random down: This is a proofing exercise and is given when the dog least expects it.

Expect him to go down immediately whether by voice command or hand signal. Good praise or review earlier training. Say, “Stay” only once!!

Problem solving: An alternative method is to secure the dog to a fence or stake while in the down position so that it cannot follow you. Use the same method as described in the Sit-Stay.

The reasons why dogs are inclined to break stays are one of many:

The dog is used to always following the owner.
The dog is not sure the owner will return.
He does not like the dogs next to him and may be frightened.
There are interesting smells near and goes to investigate.
A remark many owners pass at the club when their dogs refuse to retrieve, come when called or break a stay.

Most dogs can tell the difference between the ringing of a doorbell on television and the one at home. When a dog barks on TV he ignores it, but when one barks down the road he charges to the gate and starts barking. This tells us that the dog is able to discriminate between the different barking dogs.

That same dog may sit or go down perfectly at home, but at the club or at a different location fails to obey the same commands equally well, because he has not yet been able to generalise the commands and movements he obeyed so well at home. He does not see the commands at different places meaning exactly the same thing. This becomes worse with distractions when he can act real silly. The dog does not see that the training at the club is the same as that done at home.

When visitors come to you by car and drive up the driveway you will find the dog eager to welcome them. If the same visitors parked outside the property and walked to your gate, the dog will bark at them. He has learnt to dislike the postman and fails to discriminate between him and a visitor to your home. He will then generalise and bark at anyone at the gate.

This also applies to employees. My dog stops the gardener at the gate and will allow him in only when I have given the OK. Upon my return later I find the gardener outside the gate
because while I was away he goofed off somewhere and when he returned was not allowed in by the dog.

It can be difficult for a dog to learn that there are times when he must be able to **discriminate** and not to **generalise**.

We have all been to visit someone who insisted on showing us how clever their new puppy is and what he can do, only to find the doggy not performing to the commands. The owner then claims, “*He knows it but is just stubborn.*” This is not true. On its own the pup will be able to do it **but** when you add people, dogs or grass the pup needs time to **assimilate** each change or different **context**. If he was taught to “sit” in the kitchen with no one around, that does not mean he will “sit” on the grass in the garden. He is not defiant or spiteful, it is just that he does not know it in that new context.

By re-training him from the beginning on grass or with a visitor present he soon will be able to **generalise** and understand that “sit” means “sit” in **any place** or situation.

While the dog may be clever enough to learn through experience and what it has been taught, it also needs to know **where**, **when** and **how** to use the knowledge it has acquired.

**What can be done?**

Spend time **Shaping** behaviour when changing to a new context.

**Shaping** a behaviour means rewarding the dog in tiny, successive steps until the behaviour you want is reached. If you want to teach your dog to “Wave Goodbye” take a treat in your
hand and wave it near a paw until he moves it. Immediately reward with the treat. Repeat until he scrapes at your hand with that paw. Reward and praise and continue a bit longer each time and gradually get him to lift the paw higher into a wave.

Train in several places a few times a day. Start in the garden, then the driveway and then out in the street or safe area. Repeat the same exercise in each area. Keep it short.

If the dog’s concentration weakens away from home, lower your standards. If you did not use food or a prey item in the garden, then use food etc. away from home.

Apply the 80% rule. If you are sure that the dog will get it right 8 out of 10 times, move on to the next level.

Train at different times of the day. (Train mornings and/or evenings and at different times over weekends.)

If the dog has difficulty concentrating away from home, repeat “attention getting” exercises by getting the dog to react to its name.

Once he reacts to his name, start the exercise again but now wait for him to react. Do not repeat the word. The dog will lie down . . . . most of them will. When he does, jackpot him with all the treats in your hand.

If he refuses to “Down-stay” at a different location then the exercise should be re-taught. (See notes on “Down-stay”) Down the dog and remain standing next to him, as prescribed in the exercises, before any attempt is made to leave the dog.
Apply the **3Ds**—Adding **Duration**, **Distance**, and **Distractions**.

**Duration** comes first by making the dog to sit or down for longer periods of time.

**Distance** requires the dog to sit or go down from a greater distance.

**Distractions** implies training outdoors with people, dogs, smells etc. around. Gradually increase the **distractions** and the length of the practice sessions.

**Repeat, repeat, repeat** enough times until the dog is able to generalise to your satisfaction.

Always end exercises on a positive, happy note and remember to keep
Great care must be taken not to use any force on a dog, especially if under the age of 12 months, in an effort to get it to retrieve! The Retrieve exercise, in obedience competitions, requires a dog to “retrieve promptly” at different levels. Firstly an own article chosen by the handler, then a dumbbell and finally any article a judge may decide upon provided it is not glass, food or dangerous to the dog.

The dog must not play with the article or chew on it. He must bring it back to the handler when told to do so, sit straight at
arm’s length in front of him, hold the article until ordered to release it and then, when told, to return to the heel position.

From the above it is clear that retrieve is not simply a matter of chasing an object and bringing it back. Unless the retrieve is very carefully planned and controlled from the beginning, few dogs end up as reliable retrievers and most have to be forced to do so.

**Imprinting:**

**Step 1: Getting the puppy or young dog interested in retrieving.**

Anything that the pup will pick up such as a squeaky ball, knotted handkerchief, old sock, rubber toy etc. can be used at first. Allow him to play with and carry the article while you clap hands and make fun of the event. If the pup does not want to pick an article up and hold it, a treat can be placed inside the handkerchief or sock. When the pup happily carries the object and confidently comes to you he is ready for the next planned step. I prefer to encourage the use of a ball because most dogs love the rolling motion of a ball and will willingly pounce on the prey. It can also be rolled in such a way that it comes back towards you or be hidden so that the dog can smell it. If the dog does not want to release the ball do not force it from him. The dog should be encouraged to “hold” the article and then very gently get it to “give” by placing one hand over his nose and get the thumb and middle fingers of the other hand behind the ball from the front and then gently easing the ball out and praise him for letting go.
Retrieves should be used exclusively for retrieval exercises and be hidden between training sessions and must not be one of his regular toys. This helps the dog to associate the article with retrieving.

A good place to start teaching a puppy to retrieve is to sit down in a passage or similar quiet place and playfully toss or roll a squeaky ball about in order to get the pup interested in it and try to get him to bite and tug at it. When he picks it up you produce a second identical ball and now make that one very interesting by playing with it. The pup will drop his ball and will try to get the new one. Soon most young dogs will catch on to the game and run from one ball to the other. After a few days he can be encouraged to “come” by pulling him towards the trainer and making a big fuss and rewarding him with a treat for bringing and “giving” the ball. Great patience and many repeats of this game may be needed to get the puppy to “fetch” the ball. Gentle tugging at the ball teaches him to hold the ball in his mouth. The reason for starting in a fairly confined area is because the closer the pup is to the handler’s area of influence; the more likely he is to “give” the article. You do not have to chase the pup and you are in control all the time.

**Step 2: The wall game.** To teach the dog that HE must bring the article to YOU.

Next, the retrieve game is taken to a wall. A line is attached to the pup and the ball is gently thrown against the wall so that it will come straight back in the direction of the handler who encourages the dog to “fetch” the ball. In the beginning the pup has difficulty in stopping the ball and the trainer can easily pick it up and throw it again. This helps to agitate the pup and makes him more eager to “fetch” the ball. When he gets the
ball the handler calls “come,” and with the leash gently guides the dog towards him and with a “give” removes the ball and replaces it with a treat. The wall limits the area of movement of the dog so that the trainer needs only to pop on the line to get the dog to come to him. This exercise needs to be conducted daily until the dog willingly brings the ball to the trainer for more. When the dog consistently returns the ball to the trainer he is ready to progress to the next level.

**Step 3: Eliminating the food treat**

The trainer now moves to a different location, which allows for more space with a wall or steps at one end. As in the game above, the ball is again thrown against the wall or steps so that it returns to the trainer’s area of influence while at the same time he tells the dog to “fetch” and then quickly pops him closer to “give” before rewarding him with a treat. Soon the food/treat can be eliminated and a second ball can be introduced. Now, as the dog “gives” the first ball a second ball is thrown a short distance in the opposite direction and the dog is again told to “fetch” and is tugged back to the trainer who continues the game by throwing the first ball in the opposite direction. When the dog gets the hang of the game he will bring the ball close to the handler who must take it before throwing the next one. The second ball now becomes the reward for bringing the first one to the trainer and so, in a short while a very enjoyable retrieve game can develop.

Imprinting is not formal training. The pup must not be forced to get it right. Stop as soon as the dog begins to lose interest. Sessions should not be longer than five minutes at the most. It is best to stop while the dog is still eager to get the ball. However, it is imperative that the dog be exposed to controlled
retrieval exercises for as long as possible and in a different location in order to get a dog that is 100% reliable.

**Step 4: Introducing the dumbbell**

Do not start retrieve training with a dumbbell because one careless incident can result in the dog having a bad association with the dumbbell for life. Start a new session by playing the retrieve game as above and then suddenly replace the ball by throwing a different object such as a piece of hosepipe or a block of wood instead of the ball. When the dog successfully retrieves the new objects, they are replaced with a light dumbbell. The dog will run to the dumbbell and after some hesitation may or may not pick it up. Some dogs will come running back for the other ball in the handler’s hand, but when it is not given will go back to fetch the dumbbell. By gently pushing the dog in the direction of the dumbbell and with lots of encouragement to “fetch,” one should find that most dogs would be willing to pick up the new toy and bring it to the handler. Now is the time for enthusiastic praise, hugs and a special treat. If he drops the dumbbell make him fetch it again by treating it as a big game. Pretend to want to grab it, fumble it and let him get it.

The dumbbell must now be included in daily retrieve exercises. Great care must be taken to teach the correct responses by controlling the movements of the dog. Do not always take the retrieve article as soon as the dog brings it back, but quietly begin to stroke him behind the ear, on his back and the side of his face and let him “hold it” for longer periods before saying “give” and taking the article with much praise. Occasionally just touch the dumbbell or roll it in the
dog’s mouth before letting it go. Make sure that your hands are underneath his mouth before you say, “Give.”

Repetition in retrieval training will yield a high rate of success. Never over train! A few minutes, twice a day, until the steps are completed and the dog retrieves reliably should be enough. Make sure the dog returns to the correct Front Position. Make sure that the dog is in a playful mood before starting the retrieve exercise, not after a long walk, a big meal or when he is tired.

Mouthing: Some dogs start “mouthing” the article as it nears the handler because it knows that the handler is going to take it away. This can be corrected. Ask your trainer how? 

Suggestions: When the dog sits in front mouthing the dumbbell/object, ignore the dog completely until the mouthing stops. Do not look at the dog, wait until the mouthing stops, then take the article and praise enthusiastically. However, this method may take some time, so be very patient. A tap under the chin or on the nose with a firm “No” or “Hold” works for many dogs. Dogs do not chew/mouth when they run, so when the dog brings the article to your front, before he sits, say, “Come with me” as you turn around, take the dog’s leash and run a distance with the dog following next to you in the heel position. Then, stop and run backwards a few steps, calling the dog to you and as he gets to you, say: “Give” and take the article before mouthing starts.

Refusing to release the article If the dog refuses to release the dumbbell after being commanded to “Give,” lightly hold the dumbbell with one hand, lean over the dog and with the other hand give him a sharp pinch in the waist as you command, “Give.” Praise when he releases. Another method is to push
the dumbbell sharply and quite hard backwards against the back teeth while, at the same time, you say, “Give.”

The stage has now been reached where it must be decided whether the dog’s retrieving is consistent and very reliable or whether forced retrieval must be undertaken. Difficulties must be discussed with the trainer, who will be able to suggest new training methods that can be carefully introduced if the dog is at least 12 to 18 months old.
PART FOUR

Advanced Obedience Training
Quanto of Gleneagle
AD, BH, SchH 2, IPO 2, ITT 3, V, CD,
CGCT Gold, Breed Champion
CONTENTS

Introduction .................................................................................................283

1. Heeling ....................................................................................................285
2. Timing A Correction .............................................................................291
3. Heel On Lead ..........................................................................................293
4. Retrieve—Compulsive Method .................................................................302
5. Scent Discrimination .............................................................................309
6. Send Away, Drop & Recall ...................................................................315
7. The Stand..................................................................................................321
8. Distance Control .....................................................................................325
INTRODUCTION

I enjoy working with and training dogs and gain a great deal of pleasure from seeing handlers improve and their dogs loving their training sessions. However, the greatest satisfaction I can get is from entering obedience trials. That is where one faces the real challenges of dog training. Obedience trials consist of activities that can truly test you as a trainer/handler and your dog’s ability and compliance. This is where you aim for perfection.

Reliability is a must! Sit slightly skew and you lose a point. You have zero tolerance for anticipation or a slow sit. Enthusiasm is what is needed in a dog for training. The saying, “The fast dog loses points slowly and the slow dog loses points quickly” applies in obedience trials.

Dogs need to learn to perform their task fast. They must know the difference between a straight and a crooked sit, to be attentive all the time, to drop on command, not to take an extra step and to obey instantly and happily. In Shutzhund trials you can be disqualified for repeating a command more than twice if your dog does not comply.

This type of training may seem dull to some but is really a great challenge. The time spent with your dog is what I find so rewarding. What better way is there to bond with your dog than spending a whole day together and sharing a hamburger? Yes, my dog does not have a clue about all the trophies, medals, certificates and rosettes we bring home, but at least he enjoys the food he wins.
At obedience trials you learn from your mistakes. The first time Coyote had to retrieve a rag doll he tried to kill it. Lots of training with dolls followed. Once Juno only had to bring in the correct scent cloth to win a competition. She found it and on her way back to bring it to me she noticed a bee on a flower in the grass. We ended second again.

Advanced Obedience Training demands discipline and endurance from both you and your dog but the end result is well worth it. I hope that the articles that follow will not only show what is required from you and your dog, but that many more dog owners will join dog clubs to do more advanced obedience training and aim to progress through the different obedience trial levels.
HEELING

For the average pet dog heeling is not an important exercise to learn. Yet, one often can find a pet dog out on a walk being shouted at to “heel” while the owner repeatedly applies sharp tugs on the leash to get the dog to walk next to him.

**Heeling** is a **position** with the dog sitting or walking on the **left side** of the handler. To “Heel” simply means, to “**hold that position.**”

It is an **attention exercise** used in mainly two instances:

1) When **in traffic**, or crossing an intersection, and you want your dog to pay attention and stay close to you. This is when you will want your dog to, “Heel.”

2) In **obedience trails or competitions**, when you want to show the judge that you have created absolute attention and obedience in the required exercises to be performed, you “heel” your dog.

Serious dog trainers avoid the over use of the word in an effort to retain the natural liveliness of the dog. “**Come with me**” is the first command (It is not a request!) that I teach all dogs right from the bonding exercises. **is a position**

**Heel**

Dogs do not automatically know what to “Heel” means. It is a **specific position** that must be taught. I call Polo to me; get her to sit in front of me, on lead, and tell her to “Watch me.”
Then, while I tell her sweet nothings to maintain her attention on my face, I swivel to my left to a position very close to her sitting body. Her front paws must be more or less in the middle of my shoes and she must be looking at my face. At that very moment I say, “Heel” and immediately reward her with a few treats, known as a “jackpot.”

This I do every day, as often as possible, for a few weeks. Calling her to sit in front, “watch” while I find the heel position and she gets the reward. This is followed by, “come with me” and general training and play.

Instead of having to use the training methods used at most clubs of coming to heel—stepping back with one leg and using the lead to guide the dog into the correct position—Polo, now, knowing the heel position, smoothly moves into the correct position on command. I still sometimes have to use the lead to ensure correctness.

---

**Heeling**

**The attention phase**

It is very important to start with attention exercises where all the dog has to do is to sit and “Watch” while you move about, talking and praising your puppy or dog for being such a “good dog” before rewarding with a treat or toy.

In the attention phase we teach a dog not only what attention is but also that it is mandatory. This means that even without food or a toy the dog must be attentive. In order to achieve this, a distraction free place, familiar to the dog, such as a
room indoors would be ideal. If the dog has to be corrected repeatedly because of distractions he will soon associate training with corrections and stress and begin to resent the exercise.

Begin by sitting your dog on leash in the quiet training area. Show him a food reward and talk in an excited tone, “watch me.” Reward frequently when you get good attention and keep up the conversation to make concentration easy.

After a few training sessions it should be possible to get the dog to maintain eye contact while you begin to move backwards and sideways even briefly looking away and turning around while the dog continues watching your face. While talking and praising the dog you can occasionally tug on the leash to show that it is not a correction.

Soon the reward for good attention is given every ten seconds or more and the food is hidden in your fist and later retrieved from a pocket or pouch. Keep talking to the dog even if he cannot see the food. However, the dog must be confident that he will always be rewarded for paying attention.

**Working for a ball**

When puppies reach adolescence, food often loses its effectiveness. That is why I use a ball on a string instead of food when training Polo and my other German Shepherds. Having spent much time playing and chasing a ball in the kitchen to make my puppies “Ball mad” I now hold a ball on a string in my hand instead of food. As a reward for good “watch” concentration I throw or bounce the ball as a reward. Soon the
dog becomes aroused by the sight of the ball and is inclined to want to “mob” me for the ball.

Training now moves to the driveway or quiet area in the garden. After putting the dog on leash I arouse my dog by hiding the ball behind my back and making the dog miss as I tease him with the ball, much like a matador arouses a bull in tight passes close to the body.

This unruliness is fine because it increases attention and a willingness to “work.” By raising the ball above the dog’s head it is easy to command a quick “sit” and control of the dog before rewarding by throwing the ball as a reward.

“Come with me” vs. “Heel”

In this part of heel training I play with the ball as before to put the dog into “drive.” As soon as he is fixated on the ball held in my hand I spend a short while on the move with, “Come with me” (= follow me) where the dog stays close to me as I move about in a fairly relaxed way.

After a halt and a “sit” I move into the Heel position and now command “Heel” and step off on the left leg as soon as I have the dog’s full attention and reward with the ball after a step or two of perfect concentration from my dog.

Gradually the number of steps between rewards can be increased intermittently.

*What is important is that the dog must learn that when the “Heel” command was given perfection is demanded and every lack of concentration or loss of position will be corrected.*
“Come with me” is quite different and more casual and small lapses are overlooked.

During the second week training is done as before with larger intervals between rewards. Now the ball can be hidden by showing the back of your hand as you turn the ball away from sight or it can be held in the other hand. Continue talking to the dog!!!!

In week three the same procedure is followed. Ball is briefly in sight, then out of sight and finally in a pocket or the front of a jacket. However, the dog must know that even if it did not see the ball that by some magic one will arrive to reward attention.

Training tips

Teach the dog to wait for your left leg to move forward as the signal to start the heeling routine and not to move forward on the “heel” command. Occasionally, wait a few seconds before moving forward. Later the dog needs to know that when you step off on your right leg he must remain sitting.

When there are other dogs or distractions about the handler must keep the dog too busy to look about and become distracted. Many abrupt turns and brisk heeling can keep the focus on the handler. Inattention is met with, “watch” and a sharp pop on the leash.

The dog must be taught to happily pay attention with or without a ball. Beginner trainers often make the mistake of always having a reward (food or toy) available in training only to be disappointed when in a competition, when food is not
allowed, their dogs fail to perform. Just because the dog can heel perfectly for a visual stimulus does not mean it can also do so without it.

**Remember, the food or toy is simply a training aid used to reinforce your verbal praise and not to replace it. So talking to your dog is most important!**
TIMING A CORRECTION

In dog training a **correction** is aimed at telling the dog to . . . “*Stop doing what you are doing.*” It can take the form of a verbal reprimand, “*Watch, No, Uh etc.* ” or it can be a quick “pop” on the leash.

**Timing** is the *moment* when the correction is given. It is the *present moment* during training when the dog is making a mistake and needs to be corrected.

To clarify this concept we need to explain what is meant by *present moment*.

Anything that has already taken place is in the past and cannot be corrected. If you spilt some milk you cannot, not spill it. You can only clean it up. If you stub your toe you cannot un-stub your toe, the pain can already be felt. Once your dog has made a mistake it is too late for a correction . . . . the mistake is in the past.

You cannot correct anything that has already taken place. **So the correct time for a correction is just before it happens or as it is about to happen.** The very moment the dog’s head starts to turn away is when you must react to stop him from looking away or smelling the round. While doing a down stay and the dog is *about* to stand up is when your timing of a correction is needed and not when he is already on his way to you.

You need to learn to read your dog. Look for the body language and facial expressions of your dog so that you can correctly
anticipate the time when you need to correct. We all know when a dog is about to answer a call of nature. In the same way we need to know that when my dog stares at another dog or the cat, he is likely to react, bark or lunge. When I see my dog looking at the cat I say to him, “Don’t think about it!” and my dog looks away.

In the same way as you cannot correct in the past you cannot correct in the future but you can correct for the future. By working out beforehand what to look for and how to correct, I can help my dog to understand what is allowed and to prevent corrections.

For example: Before a planned training session I will place a meaty bone on a saucer on the field and “Heel” my dog in that direction. The moment his head begins to turn and he wants to look or get the bone my correction takes place, both verbally and a pop as I change direction. After a few passes my dog’s head will start moving towards the saucer but before I can react he usually corrects himself.

When his head starts swinging to the left and then immediately back is a sure indication that he is beginning the thinking.

It is sad to see how many trainers “allow” their dogs to be corrected for actions in the past that could have been prevented. These dogs soon begin to associate training with unpleasant collar corrections and before long do not look forward to the formal training sessions.

Please remember that the timing of a correction can only be applied effectively if you have the dog paying attention!!!!!
What the rulebook says. In obedience tests the dog is expected to sit and move smartly on the handler’s working side and at the pace of the handler. The right shoulder of the dog should be level and about 100-150mm (4-6 inches) from the left knee of the handler. This position should be maintained throughout the exercise, except the about turn when the dog must move behind the handler’s legs and return to the original heel position. The main feature of the Heel exercise is the ability of the dog to work with its handler as a team.

Remember; “Heel” means, “remain in this position.” The dog’s attention must be on the handler and he must not smell the ground as he would on a casual walk. Heeling forms an important part of all obedience exercises and must be practiced as often as possible. Jerking a dog into a heeling position is punishment and must never be used during training.

Command “Heel”

The Heel exercise always starts from a static position i.e. a spot indicated by the judge or after a Halt. The voice command should always start with the dog’s name (meaning pay attention) e.g. “Juno, Heel” or “Coyote, Heel or Close” or similar command meaning remain in this position. The voice command should be firm but never given in a reprimanding tone.
The Hand Signal

One way of signalling readiness in the beginning of the Heel exercise is to pass the right hand over the nose of the dog and placing it next to your left shoulder i.e. between your face and that of the dog. Previously the right hand would have contained the tidbit or prey item. This should draw the dog’s face up towards that of the handler.

The Heel

The dog must be sitting straight and very close to the handler’s left side making sure that the dog’s right front paw is exactly next to the middle of the handler’s left shoe.

The dog must learn that the left foot gives the signals and he must stick to it like glue.

The Heel Position must become the most pleasant and loving position in the dog’s life. See “Bonding.”

Preparing for the Heel Exercise

Before the Heel exercise starts the ring steward will ask, “Handler, are you ready?” Before answering, the handler must glance down and ensure that he and the dog are facing straight up the ring and that the dog is sitting straight in the Heel Position and that the dog has his attention on the handler.

When ordered to go e.g. “Normal pace forward,” the handler leans forward with the torso and steps off with the left foot. The first few steps should be about three quarters of a full stride. This helps the dog to keep up with the handler.
Training for the Heel Exercise (See “Heeling” 1)

In “Heeling (1)” the dog was taught to focus on the prey item hidden in the Handler’s fist or jacket and is able to maintain Heel position in anticipation of receiving a reward sooner or later. This section must be reviewed regularly!!!

Please also be reminded that the dog must first obey your commands smartly and correctly before you even think of rewarding him. You have access to what the dog wants and therefore is able to take control of him. However, do not wait for the dog to make mistakes, get into the habit of rewarding the nice bits and if you cannot find anything to reward then your standards at that stage are too high.

Now take the leash in the left hand fairly close to the catch (depending on the size of the dog) and as firmly as possible to keep the dog close to the left leg. With the dog’s full attention to your right hand holding the prey item against your left shoulder, give the Heel command and move in a straight line, slowly at first and gradually up to normal pace. The short lead will ensure that the dog remains in the correct position. As soon as the dog is in the correct position, the tension on the lead is relaxed. The short lead reminds the dog that he is not free to do as he wishes, but as soon as he is in the correct position he is praised and the pressure is released. A constant tight lead does not teach the dog anything except to hate heeling.

The secret of this method is that as soon as the dog stops resisting, by moving close to you in the correct position, the tension is released and he is praised and rewarded.
If the dog’s head is held high towards your right hand, which can be lowered or raised, then always wheel to your **left** first before wheeling to the right.

**Changes of Pace**

There are three paces in obedience tests i.e. normal pace, fast pace and slow pace. Since the handler may only give a “Heel” command after a halt, he may NOT give a command for change of pace.

Normal pace is conducted at a brisk pace suited to your dog.

Fast pace is a brisk trot but not a fast run or a gallop. Fast pace is useful to liven up an inattentive or bored dog. Care must be taken that the dog does not get out of control and that the sits at halts are straight and that the turns are done correctly.

Slow pace is slow and steady but not a crawl or jerky. Dogs often lose concentration during slow pace, start sniffing and are slow to sit at halts.

Ring wise dogs can pick up the orders from the judge’s steward and also that the handler’s body leans further forward or back.

Rapid pace changes helps with inattentive dogs and lagging or forging ahead.
**General**

Always halt on the left foot.

Reward only best, close heeling. Heeling out of position should never be praised or rewarded.

If the dog lags it is better to slow down and let it catch up so that you are once again in a position to praise rather than fight.

Once the dog is heeling consistently with good attitude, the next step is to establish reliability and correctness.

The dog should now be heeling for distances of thirty paces or more and be watching you the whole time before a release is given.

The main aim at this stage must be heeling with concentration in the correct position. Trainers like Tom Rose believe that turns and stops are much easier if the dog’s concentration on the handler is so intense that such moves are no surprise to the dog.

Turns are not delayed because they are difficult, but because they are easy to learn once the dog has learnt to heel in a straight line with full attention and concentration.

**Left turn**

Start heeling in a straight line, but at a slightly slower pace, with the lead held in the left hand. Move the head sharply to the left, followed by a sharp pop to the left of the dog with the
outstretched left arm. Now if the dog has been making eye contact it will soon begin to link a left turn of the head and a left tug on the lease as a signal to do a 90-degree turn to the left.

After the left turn continue along a straight line for a while giving lots of praise before the next left turn is made.

**Right turn**

The right turn is taught in the same way, except that the head is now moved sharply to the right and the lead is pulled with a pop to the right at the same time as the body makes a 90-degree turn to the right. A constant speed must be maintained during turns to avoid the dog going wide or anticipating moves of the handler.

**Right about turn**

This requires a 180-degree turn to move in the opposite direction.

This turn causes problems when the dog does not pay attention. In the beginning speed should be reduced to allow the dog more time to become aware of what is happening. A series of small pops on the leash will bring him around if he is not paying attention.

If the dog works well on the ball or food, the right hand can hold it down in front of the dog’s face to encourage the turn. When the turn is completed the ball or food can be thrown on a release, “Take a break”. This will increase the speed and closeness of the turn. Another method is for the handler to
speed up as he takes the turn by increasing the length of his first “backward” stride. Pops on the leash and the ball or food must come into play immediately the turn is completed.

The Left about turn

As required by the Shutzhund rules is perhaps more difficult only in that the handler does a left about turn whilst the dog does a right about turn.

This is more of a problem for the handler who has to transfer the lease from the right hand to the left halfway through the turn, but not for the dog because his turn remains the same.

In order to get the dog to turn as quickly and as closely as possible to the handler, food or the ball on a string (prey items) should be used for as long as is necessary. However, good turns require the dog to pay attention so make sure to get the dog’s attention before going into the turn.

Some other exercises that may help the turns are as follows:

“Turn 360 degrees or right about so that you continue in the same original direction.
“Instead of turning about, take a step backwards to get the dog to come about and then continue forwards.
“Mark time on the spot while the dog comes around before continuing in a straight line.
“Practise the figure of eight turns.
Heel and Turn Exercises

Left Turn: It is recommended that the following exercise first be practised without the dog in order to avoid confusing the dog.

Step off on the left leg and after a few paces when the left foot is on the ground, look to your left and think “left turn” take a further step with the right leg while at the same time you tug the leash to the left of the dog. Make a 90° left turn with the left leg before continuing followed by treat/FREE etc.

The tug on the leash is to avoid stepping into the dog.

Right Turn

Step off on the left leg and after a few paces when the right foot is on the ground, look to your right and think “turn right” take a further step with the left leg and then do a 90° right turn with the right leg. Continue one more pace before you Click/treat “FREE” etc. and play with the dog.

When turning to the right you need not tug on the leash, as you must do when turning left in order not to walk into the dog.

Quick Starts

Start with the dog sitting in the correct heel position.

Get the dog’s attention by calling her name: “JUNO” and as soon as she looks at you face, lean forward with the top of your body, give the “HEEL” command and set off at fast pace.
Run a short distance, stop suddenly and tug backwards on the leash to help the dog to stop next to you.

Soon you will find that the dog begins to anticipate the start as you lean forward. That means that the dog is beginning to think!
I’m amazed at the number of owners who tell me, “My dog won’t retrieve. I give up!” I usually respond by saying, “Let me try.” With the aid of a squeaky toy or quoits ring I soon can get the dog, not only interested in the article, but also to carry it for a while. Having demonstrated how it is done, I send the delighted owner away to get a similar article and train the dog. One week later they return to report that they did not have the time to purchase the specific toy their dog was willing to retrieve. In this case retrieve may be an owner/trainer problem. The “play method “which is rarely successful with adult dogs should be introduced during puppy training so that the puppy can associate Retrieving with pleasure.

However, it is suggested that up to 80% of dogs do not have the natural Retrieve instinct and have to be taught to retrieve using some form of compulsion. To these dogs retrieving will not be a game, but a formal obedience exercise. The compulsive method pressurises the dog to physically retrieve, whether he likes it or not, because he is ordered to do so.

There are many compulsive retrieve methods such as the Koehler method, which uses the pinched ear method in which the dog “chooses” between discomfort and retrieving. Although I do not recommend this method, I have had to use it in an extreme case, with great success. The Tom Rose back tie method similarly applies pressure on the dog’s neck whilst other methods such as the toe pinch, collar twist etc. all inflict a degree of pain or discomfort, forcing the dog to take the
A Trained Dog is a Good Dog

dumbbell. The dog then associates taking the object with relief when the pressure or discomfort is removed.

**The following Compulsive Method should not stress the dog at all.**

**Commands:** I prefer to limit my retrieve commands to, “Fetch” or “Bring” “Hold,” “Give” or “Aus” and ‘Heel” or “Fuss”. Other trainers may use, Take, Fetch, Hold, Bring and Finish/Heel.

**Step 1:** Getting the dog to take the article/dumbbell. *Any soft article such as a rope-toy or a newspaper wrapped in tape etc. will do.*

When previous attempts to get a dog to retrieve have failed, a fair amount of resistance in trying to reintroduce an article into its mouth is likely to be encountered. Starting anew, you are going to need the dog’s full attention so you must start in a quiet, distraction free area such as a spare room. **Patience and repetition with lots of praise are the rules**. Tone of voice is very important for getting a dog to happily obey instructions. Before starting make sure you understand what you are about to attempt in each step.

Place the dog in the sit position roughly on your left-hand side with your foot or knee on the leash to prevent the dog from pulling away. With the index finger and thumb of your left hand over the upper jaw, gently lift the dog’s head upwards while coaxing the thumb into his mouth just behind the canine teeth. Gently push the article in your right hand against the dog’s upper lip, just below the nose. As he opens his mouth, gently place the article into his mouth, say, “Hold” and apply
slight pressure with the right hand on the bottom jaw. If he opens his mouth and accepts the article, praise enthusiastically, “Good hold, Good dog” etc. Let him hold the article for a few seconds then say, “Give” and take the article. Praise and treat. Do not release the finger pressure too soon. All you want to do at this stage is for the dog to sit quietly while you praise him, rubbing behind his ear as you say the retrieve commands. Let the dog hold the article for only two or three seconds then say “OK” (Release command) and remove the article from his mouth. Repeat this step four or five times and then end the training session.

Repeat over the next week until the dog will take the article for at least 10 times without fail.

If the dog refuses to open his mouth, you need to find out if he dislikes the hands or the article. Remove the article and try and open his mouth again. If he does not resent the hands then it is the article. If he fights the hands then a new programme of introducing the hands must be done over the next week or two.

**Be as gentle as possible while you show the dog what you want him to do. Change the activity at the first signs of stress from the dog. Scratching behind his ear helps.**

Repeat regularly until the dog happily accepts the article/dumbbell when presented. If the dog continues to resist taking the dumbbell on command, try changing the retrieve article for something else and if successful go back to the dumbbell again. Another compulsive method may have to be tried. Discuss other methods with the instructor.
Step 2: The Hold.

As soon as the dog happily takes the dumbbell, it is time to say, “Hold.” If he willingly holds it, praise him, “Good hold” etc. Wait a few seconds then say, “Give” and remove the dumbbell.

If the dog wants to spit the dumbbell out, be ready to immediately place a hand under his lower jaw and gently lift it up for a second or two while you say, “Hold” and then with a, “Give” remove the dumbbell. Do not force hold the dumbbell in his mouth. It may take a while for the dog to realise that you want him to hold the dumbbell in his mouth until you demand it back. In the beginning the hold must be very brief, but the time can gradually be increased. Praise enthusiastically when he holds the article.

Repeat this exercise until the dog will hold the dumbbell each time it is presented, then say, “Come with me” and encourage the dog to carry the article/dumbbell on a walk.

If the dog does not want to release the object given to him, be careful not to hurt his mouth by yanking or twisting it out of his mouth. Gently remove it in the same way as it was put into his mouth when he refused to take it earlier. If this proves to be difficult, offer a treat or a sharp pinch in the dog’s waist with the left hand should do the trick.

When the dog will take and hold the article faultlessly for at least 10 times, he is ready for the next step to actually go out and fetch the article/dumbbell.
Step 3: The Fetch.

This step is again broken down in different parts, as the dumbbell is moved further and further away. The commands, “Fetch,” “Hold” and “Give” must be used each time.

Reaching for a dumbbell held steadily only a few millimetres in front of his mouth is the next very important goal. Start as before in the sit position and gently take hold of his collar with the left hand while holding the article out of sight behind your right leg. Slowly bring the article forward while watching the dog. As soon as he looks at the article, quickly hide it again behind the right leg while the left hand restrains the dog from going after the article. Repeat the “hide-and-seek” game until the dog gets excited while being praised enthusiastically. Once it is clear that the dog wants to get hold of the article, say, “Fetch” and allow the dog to reach forward and take the article that is not moved any closer to him. When the dog reaches, even the slightest bit forward, you know that he is beginning to understand what you want him to do.

He must then “Hold” and “Give” as in the previous exercises. If the dog can do it successfully, the dumbbell is gradually moved further away until he has to move an arm’s length away. Praise and rewards must be given.

Picking it up from the floor: Next the dumbbell is placed on the floor directly in front of the dog and he is then encouraged to “Fetch” it. Gradually it is moved further away but always so that it is directly in front and in full view of the dog.

At this stage the leash must be used to “pop” the dog to bring the object to your front position before the “Give” is requested.
so that the trainer can receive it. Praise must be given for all successful retrievals.

**Throwing** the dumbbell is the next logical step.

Now the dog is given a *Sit-Stay* in the *heel* position. A longer leash is attached to the dog. The dumbbell is thrown a short distance in front of the dog and he is allowed to retrieve **as soon as it hits the ground.** *It is important not to dampen his enthusiasm to get to the dumbbell.* As before, he is encouraged to **hold** and **give.** Praise must be given for successful retrieves.

**Distance** and **Stays** follow.

Next the dog is given a firm **“Wait”** in the heel position before throwing the dumbbell a short distance. The dog must now **wait** before the **“Fetch”** command is given. Gradually the distance of the throw and the length of the stay are increased. When the dog is steady in his stays, he is ready for the next step.

**Off-leash** work can now be attempted.

**Do not rush the steps or proceed to the next step before the previous step has been mastered.**

**Problem solving:**

**“Mouthing”** is a condition where the dog does not have a firm grip on the article, but constantly “chews” at it and may even drop it on the way back before presenting it to the handler. *It
is suggested that the dog does this because he knows that the article is soon going to be taken away from him.

**Method:** Let the dog carry a “Tug” while next to you and then steal it out of his mouth. After a few times the dog will begin to maintain a firm grip on the “Tug” so that it cannot easily be taken away and he won’t drop it.

**Motivating a reluctant retriever:** Some dogs are slow at going out to fetch the dumbbell and even slower in the return. One way of improving their speed is to offer them something they like to play with such as a ball on a string, play tug or a very tasty tidbit when they return. A slow return gets nothing, but a faster one has great fun at the end. After a while the dog begins to understand and soon hurries back for the reward game.
SCENT DISCRIMINATION

Description of Exercise

The dog, on command, must select by scent and retrieve an article that has been handled by its Handler or the Judge and is placed (with tongs) amongst up to a maximum of 9 (nine) other articles, which should be handled, for a short time, by the steward before placing them in any pattern, but they must be about 500mm apart. Handler and dog must be faced away when the judge’s/decoy steward’s/handler’s articles are being placed about five metres away from the dog and handler.

Class A

The scent article is selected by the handler and is scented by the handler. Dumbbells may not be used.

Class B

The handler is given one or two (at his choice) similar cloth articles for scenting. The second article (if requested) will be used to give scent to the dog. A single decoy cloth article will be placed in position.

Class C

The judge shall provide for each dog two cloth articles, one to be placed by the steward for selecting by the dog and the other one given to the handler for the purpose of giving scent to the dog. At least two decoy cloth articles must be used.
General comments: The dog already knows how to use his nose and to retrieve a dumbbell. The dog must now be taught to find an article with the handler’s scent from amongst other non-scented or decoy articles. The dog must be made to understand which scent must be concentrated on and those he must ignore. Dogs have incredibly sensitive noses so it is not really necessary to rub the article furiously in order to give the dog an advantage. However, what rubbing and handling does is to make the article warmer than the rest of the articles on the ground.

Scent will dissipate from the article within 24-36 hours if aired properly and even quicker if left in the sun and wind. Wet articles must be properly dried or washed in order to avoid mould forming. Dogs hate carrying mouldy articles. Never snatch, jerk, pull or clumsily remove an article from the dog otherwise he is likely to bring the article only part of the way. To avoid confusing the dog, it is recommended to use one word, which indicates food or toys (e.g. “SEEK”), and a completely different word for articles with human scent on it (e.g. “FIND IT”). What is important is that you use the SAME command each time.

Hand?

SCENT GAMES

Which With food or a toy in one hand, present both closed hands to the dog. Ask him, “Which one?” The dog must touch or paw the correct hand before receiving a treat. No treat for a wrong answer! Toys work better in this game because food smells cling to the hands and can be confusing. I find it best to allow the dog to smell both hands and wait for him to persistently nudge one hand before he gets the treat.
Lights Out: Show the dog a treat or toy and then place it out of sight in a dark room. Tell him to SEEK—follow him and praise enthusiastically. If a toy is use, reward him with some play before repeating. When multiple treats are used, this game helps to build persistence and trust. This game can also be played in daylight by hiding the cookies in a shoe or on a low shelf etc.

Find It. Use a toy or stick and after some playing with the object, hold the dog as you throw the object into the grass, tall enough to hide it. The dog can see the general area where the object fell. Count to three before releasing the dog to “Find it” or “Seek.” Gradually increase the time before releasing the dog. A puppy food pellet on the lawn works very well.

Dark Search: Using the same rules as above, this game relies on the cover of darkness to encourage the dog to use his nose. Do not make it too difficult for the dog in the beginning. The point of the game is success, not frustration.

The Right One: This is a more advanced game aimed at teaching the dog that only one, specific object is desired. Use a tennis ball to briefly play with the dog. Then, using the 3-2-1 Find It technique, throw the ball into an area where you have hidden some similar objects. If the dog brings the wrong article, say nothing as you take it away and send him again. The right article gets lots of enthusiastic praise and some play before the game is repeated.

Find it! As you go walking with your dog you discreetly drop an object you have been carrying or had in your pocket. Continue walking for 10-15 steps, then stop, patting your pockets you ask the dog, “Where is it? Find it!” Begin walking
back to where you dropped it. Encourage the dog to sniff the ground by pointing and telling him to FIND IT. In the beginning the dog may need help, so kick it or play with it. Once the dog gets the idea, make a big fuss and repeat. This game can be made difficult by increasing the distance between the drop and the search.

**FORMAL TRAINING**

**Step 1: Familiarise the dog with the scented article.** Start by giving your dog some experience in handling an article and associating it with your scent. Rub the article, cloth with both hands and hold it close to the dog’s nose so that he can smell it while it is in your hands. Next, have the dog hold it briefly and praise him enthusiastically for doing it. Repeat a few times and then give a FREE.

After a break, casually drop the article on the grass and encourage the dog to “fetch.”

**Step 2: Retrieving Thrown Article.** The dog must now be trained to retrieve the scented article as well as the dumbbell. If the dog is a natural retriever, the cloth is thrown as you would a toy. If the dog is not a natural retriever, you need to repeat the basic retrieve sequence of Take, Hold, Fetch, and Give etc. This can be done on- or off-lead. Once the dog is reliably retrieving the thrown article, the handler can begin to insist on correct Stays, Fronts and Finishes. The dog is now ready for the next step.

**Step 3: Retrieving Placed Articles.** The article should now be placed on the ground near the dog to be retrieved. Give lots of praise and a treat for correct retrieve. The distance of
the article from the dog is gradually increased by a metre at a time to about 5 metres. Once the dog is reliably retrieving a placed scented article, the handler must again insist on correct positions such as Stays, Fronts and Finishes.

**Step 4: Articles on the Mat.** A second unscented article is now added by securing it near the corner of a mat or under a bathroom tile, which is then placed some distance from the dog that is sitting in the Heel position and facing the mat. The handler throws the scented article carefully so that it lands on or over (beyond) the mat and sends the dog to retrieve. The dog may follow the flight of the article and at first retrieves without a search.

The dog may retrieve the correct article without investigating the other article or he may try to retrieve the wrong article and find that he cannot move it from the training mat. This is the point of the exercise and is good training for the dog. If the dog now picks up the correct article, and brings it back, he must receive enthusiastic praise and a treat. Do not talk to the dog while he is “working.” If he stops and looks confused, calmly walk up to the mat, point out the correct article and tell him to find it or fetch. Repeat, using the same article, until the dog regularly approaches the articles with his head down and retrieves the correct article consistently. The dog has now learnt that the only article he can retrieve is the one with the owner’s sent and that he must use his nose to find it.

Now add more articles to the mat and repeat the exercise as long as it remains enjoyable and fun for the dog.

In the beginning, to help the dogs understand the game and to identify the correct article, it is a good idea to click when
he gets to the right cloth. Once he gets the hang of what is required of him, delay the Click to see if he can decide on his own. Do not continue to praise or “click” while the dog is mouthing or identifying the correct article! Otherwise, the dog will continue to search, even if he has found the correct article, because he will be waiting for the handler’s praise or “click” to confirm the correct article.

Do not punish the dog for retrieving the wrong article! Ignore the error. Rather walk back to the mat, point out the correct article and praise enthusiastically when the correct article is retrieved. Do stand still because any body movement by the handler during the search may give the dog the wrong “clues” i.e. he may be waiting for a movement before retrieving. Once the dog has mastered the exercise and retrieves the correct article, do not continue to use the same article over and over. Rotate the articles.
SEND AWAY, DROP & RECALL

What the rule book says

Class B: The handler will stand with his dog in the heel position and on command will send his dog forward about 20m to a marker and command the dog into the down position. When the dog is down the handler will be ordered to recall his dog or to move as directed and then recall the dog while he is moving and continue with the dog until ordered to halt. The dog must remain in the down position until recalled and then move smartly and directly to the handler.

Class C: The exercise is performed in the same manner as for Class B. The dog will be sent to a spot discreetly marked so that it is readily visible to the handler but not easily identifiable by the dog.

Training

(See Clicker Training for an alternative method using a target stick.)

Material: Stake/target stick with tape or flag, prey item or retrieve article e.g. ball. (A small mat or towel can be used instead of a stake.)

Step 1: Getting the dog to run to the marker/mat.

Place the dog in a Sit-stay or down position. The handler moves 3m away, plants the stake and sits behind it before
calling the dog. The dog runs to the handler and when it is about 1m-2m away the ball or prey item is gently thrown into the air towards the dog for it to catch. When the dog catches the ball the handler calls “fetch”, moves to collect the ball before the dog drops it and rewards the dog with some food. Always sit behind the stake so that the dog can associate the send away with the marker/stake/mat. This exercise is repeated until the dog runs willingly to the handler at a fast speed. As in the recall, the greater the distance the dog has to run to the handler, the faster it should run, so the stake is moved out 5m, 7m to 10m as training improves.

**Step 2:** The stake is returned to a short distance of 3m-5m.

The dog is given a Sit-stay. The handler walks to the stake, shows the dog the ball or prey item, places the reward at the base of the stake and returns to the dog. The handler holds the dog by the collar, points to the stake and encourages the dog to, “Go”. The dog is released to run to the stake and the reward. The handler quickly follows the dog to praise it enthusiastically for running to the stake. Give a release, “Take a break” or “free”, throw the ball into the air and play with the dog for a few seconds. If the dog does not run to the stake, the distance must be shortened. Step 2 is the most important because this is the first time that the dog is working independently away from the handler by going to the stake! You must be very sure that the dog associates the stake with the reward before you go any further. The stake is again moved further away as training progresses.

**Step 3:** (Teaching the down away from the handler but not yet at the stake)
Before this step can be started the “Down”-command must be revised. The dog must go down smartly and willingly so that it will respond to the down command 3m to 7m away. (Remember to use the Three & a Freebie and the 5-5-5 rules.)

Initially the ball is thrown no more than 1m away. When the dog retrieves the ball a “Down” command is given. The dog must go down immediately. If it does not, you must return to working on the down exercise next to the handler. Do not give the down command before the dog has retrieved the ball because a good retriever will ignore the down command until it has picked up the ball. Also, do not give the down command every time you throw the ball because the dog must not think that he is supposed to go down every time you throw something. Once the dog will down consistently close to the handler (Three & a Freebie rule) the distances can gradually be extended so that he will go down instantly further away. The reason for combining this exercise with the retrieve of an object is that the dog is being forced to go down while he is excited about the reward. Later he is going to have to go down while running away from you.

Gradually move further away from the dog until it goes down at greater distances. Do not attempt to down the dog with the send out until the “down” is absolutely correct at a distance otherwise you will have to start giving corrections and the dog’s attitude will possibly suffer!

When the dog has satisfactorily completed the previous two steps then send it to the stake and reward. When the dog gets to the stake, call its name and give it a down command. Remember to move quickly to the dog and give an immediate reward and release while you play with the dog for a few seconds.
Step 4: During this step transference begins where the dog does not always find a reward at the stake, but is rewarded for going to the stake. The dog must never know when the reward is there so a random pattern must be followed. It is recommended that the reward must be a ball or a larger object that can easily be seen by the dog. If a food treat/reward is used, the dog is inclined to slow down as he nears the stake and starts smelling the ground for the food/treat. On the first send out the handler will give a down command and then plant the stake 3m away and place a reward at the foot of the stake in full view of the dog. The dog is sent out as before and downed at the stake. The second time, the handler again walks to the stake but this time only pretends to place a reward at the stake. The handler returns to the dog and gives a send out with a down when he gets to the stake. When he responds correctly the handler quickly moves to the dog and gives a reward and/or throws a ball. The third time is the same as the first and the forth as the second. This is followed by a random pattern for a week or more.

Step 5: Now, in this step, the handler does not first go to the stake to put a reward or pretend to put a reward. The handler starts a session by placing a reward at the stake, plays with the dog and then hides the ball in a pocket or jacket. He quickly gives a send out so that the dog will run to the stake. When the dog goes to the stake a reward is given as before. In order to get the dog to continue going to the stake when he cannot see a reward, a random pattern need to be followed. Over a period of time the dog is weaned from seeing the handler walking to the stake so that it will go to the stake when sent. The dog must associate the stake with a reward and not the spot, so rewards are continued each time. When the dog can go out
time after time without the handler first going to the stake then he is ready for the next step.

**Step 6:** The stake is now gradually moved to greater distances of 20m or more. If the dog moves quickly to the stake the next step is to have the dog down before it gets to the stake. Send the dog and then give a down command at no more than 5m-10m away. Random training is important because the dog may want to slow down in anticipation of the down command before it gets to the stake. So, don’t overdo this exercise. Rather send him the full distance 3 times before an early down.

The dog can now also be sent to the stake but not downed. If he automatically downs he should be encouraged to “Go” further. Once the dog understands what is expected of it the stake can be removed and replaced by a smaller peg, object or mat. A square white marker is used in Class B.

At this stage the dog needs guidance from the trainer. I find it best to start the dog from a sitting position, stand astride the dog with my hands on the sides of his head and pointing him in the direction I want him to run. Whilst tilting his head slightly forward I repeat the words “Look straight” “Look straight” (or “Go touch” if taught during Clicker training). I slowly remove my hands upwards and away so that when he wants to turn his head I can quickly redirect his head repeating, “Look straight”. If this method is applied when the stake is used in the earlier steps, the dog soon learns the meaning of the command and begins to look straight ahead.
Step 7: Recall.

After successfully downing the dog at the stake, leave your position, moving at normal pace towards the dog, make a right or left turn, call the dog to come, halt after walking for another five paces and wait for the dog to get into the heel position on your left side. Praise enthusiastically.
The average dog has little difficulty in learning the sit and down commands but can easily become confused with an order to stand. This is particularly true if the Stand is not introduced at a fairly young age. Because the Stand is taught from the sit, it should only be introduced when a puppy is happy and confident in the sit and down.

**Puppy Stand**

Have the puppy sit while on lead, held in your left hand. With a treat in the right hand allow the puppy to sniff it briefly and then withdraw the treat towards you, elbow passing your right side, in order to draw the puppy forward and into a standing position. Allow the puppy to get the food only when he is standing properly. Give the command “Stand” and praise. Do not expect a puppy to remain standing for long. Repeat a few times. *I prefer to draw the word out to “St-a-a-nd” in order to get it to differ from other commands such as “Sit.” A disadvantage of this method is that the dog moves forward into the standing position which may conflict with requirements of obedience training at a higher level.*

**Preventing forward movement**

*This exercise, although also taught from the Sit position, encourages the dog to move its back legs backwards into a standing position and is suitable for slightly older puppies or dogs.* Have the puppy sitting on lead and offer a treat, but just as he tries to take it move the treat under his chin and
back towards his throat. This will make the puppy or older dog move its head down into his chest in order to get at the treat. His back will arch and he will move his legs backwards into a standing position. As soon as he stands, give the “St-a-a-nd” command and treat. *Getting the movement with the food under the chin can be tricky and may need a bit of practice. With very young puppies I have found that using my left hand to initially lift the back legs a bit soon gets the puppy the idea of moving backwards into the Stand.*

**Older dog Stand**

When teaching the Stand to an older dog for the first time I again start from a sitting position. I place the dog sitting while on lead in the Heel position next to me, then make a left turn, facing the dog. Using the foot of my right leg I gently move it forward in order to touch the dog’s back left foot. As the dog feels my foot under its belly and the gentle tap on the foot, it invariably moves its back legs into a standing position. As soon as the dog stands I give the “St-a-a-nd” command and press down or pat the hindquarters of the dog to encourage it to stand firmly and not regress into a sit again. *A common mistake is to use your foot to lift the dog into a standing position.*

The leash is used to prevent any forward movement. Practicing the Stand by getting the dog to sit on a top stair or a terrace will prevent a forward moving habit from developing. At feeding time I hold Quanto’s food dish in front of his chest when giving the Stand command, forcing him to move backwards into a stand position in order for him to get his food.
Distance Control Stand

Please refer to my article on Distance Control in the advanced section for alternative ideas on teaching the Stand from different obedience positions.

Standing from a walk

The handler begins with the dog on a short tab leash. He heels very slowly and then as his left foot touches the ground, abruptly commands, “Back” while tugging sharply backwards on the leash and at the same time stepping forward, away from the dog. If the dog tries to follow him or takes a step forward the handler corrects it again and repeats, “Back.”

As soon as the dog stands still, the handler returns to the dog and praises enthusiastically. This is followed by a “Heel” command, walking a short distance and immediately doing another stand out of motion. After a few sessions it may be possible to repeat the exercise while dropping the leash and doing a free heel exercise at a slow pace. It is a mistake to come to a halt as the “Back” command is given.

Standing from a run

Once the dog has learnt to stop instantly on a slow walk the handler can begin to move more quickly. He walks increasingly faster as he gives the “Back” command, until eventually he is running. The dog must learn to come to a clean stand out of a fast trot. The dog must not be allowed to even take a step or two after hearing the “Back” command otherwise it will become a bad habit that is going to persist. In order to help my dog I often swing my right leg with bent knee around the front
of my left leg to block my dog on his chest as I give the “Back” command. This I do intermittently to ensure a clean Stand in this exercise.
DISTANCE CONTROL

In this exercise the handler is placed at least ten paces in front of and facing his dog. The dog can be in the sit, down or stand position. On the order of the judge/steward, the handler will give the following six instructions to his dog in any sequence the judge may desire:

“Stand”, “Sit”, “Down”, “Stand”, “Sit”, “Down”.

The handler may command his dog to follow these instructions either by spoken command or by signal and with or without the use of the dog’s name. During the execution of this exercise the dog may not move more than his body length in any direction. This can be a very difficult exercise because the dog must remain on the same spot. Care must be taken that the dog does not develop bad habits that remained unchecked. The French place their dogs on a tree stump or small table to overcome this problem. Some trainers place objects in front of the dog or stand it on a landing or terrace edge. Standing in front of the dog when this exercise was first introduced is possibly the main reason for the forward movement of the dog.

The dog should have been trained to immediately obey the “Sit” and “Down” commands and must know the “Stand” command before distance control is attempted. Distance control is taught in different stages that need to be mastered before commencing to the next stage.
The “SIT” to the “STAND”

Start with the dog sitting correctly at heel. Turn left towards the dog and place the right hand, fully opened on the dog’s chest in order to stop any forward movement. If the dog moves forward when the “Staa-a-nd” command is given, correct the movement at once with a “No” and push the dog back to the original position. Place the left arm over the dog and with the left hand underneath the dog; gently lift the hindquarters into a standing position at the same time as the “Staa-a-nd” command is given.

It is very important to treat the dog gently and praise him for standing. I prefer to leave Coyote standing in a show stance for a few second while I stroke his hindquarters to get him to stand firmly while I repeat, “Good Staa-a-nd” etc.

Larger breed dogs find it more difficult to move their back legs backwards in order to raise themselves to a standing position at first. In the beginning it may be necessary to physically lift the hindquarters a number of times before Bozo gets the hang of it. Now, when I feed Coyote I first order him to sit and then, holding his food bowl close to his nose, order him to “Staa-a-nd”. He now has to move his back legs and stand to get his grub. Let the dog remain standing for about 10 seconds before giving the “Sit” command. The right hand must be kept against the dog’s chest to prevent him from moving forward. The left hand presses the hindquarters down while at the same time preventing the dog from swaying away from you. Better still, slide the left hand over the dog’s tail and with a gentle karate chop against the back legs you easily introduce a sitting position. Do NOT allow any forward movement of the front feet. At first you will find that the dog
moves slightly backwards as he sits down. This will disappear later in training.

Repeat the above “Stand” exercise up to five times before you order, “Take a break.” Assist the dog each time he commences to rise. Do not be tempted to test the dog to see if he will stand on his own without help. You will soon find out when he begins to rise before you have applied any lift. Do not praise too enthusiastically because he may start moving his feet when he gets excited.

When your dog reacts promptly to the stand and sit commands, move yourself slightly forward to the dog’s neck area, but close enough to correct any forward movement or slow reaction. After five faultless responses, move forward again, but no more than a metre directly in front of the dog, still close enough to correct any forward movement. Increase the distance away from the dog ONLY when he is comfortable, confident and responds quickly and accurately, five times in succession. Do not be in a hurry; it may take weeks or months before you reach this stage.

**Alternative method**

Another method of teaching the “Stand” from the “Sit” is to sit down in a chair and let the dog sit between your legs. Now, with the tastiest morsel in your right fist, move your hand past the dog’s head and say “Back” or “Stand” as you extend your arm towards the dog’s tail. The dog will immediately try to turn round to get at the food, but your legs and knees will prevent him from turning. His only option then is to move backwards before turning, and to do so; he must move his legs back in
order to be able to rise. The dog cannot move forward and is forced to use his back legs to get to a standing position.

Praise enthusiastically and repeat as often as needed.

**The “Down” to the “Stand”**

After having mastered the “Sit to Stand,” it is easier to teach the dog to “Stand” from the “Down” position. Start by giving the “Down” command and ensure that the dog goes straight down with his legs tucked under his body so that he can rise easily. He must not be allowed to lie in the relaxed position used for the down stay exercise, i.e. rolling over on to his hindquarters. Dogs soon associate this new position with the distance control exercise.

Once again, take up position facing close to the side of the dog. The right hand is on the dog’s chest to prevent any forward movement and with the left hand the dog is again helped to rise. An alternative position for the right hand is under the dog’s chest just behind the front legs. Here again the idea is to prevent any forward movement and to help the dog into a sitting position. Give the command “Coyote . . . . Staa-a-nd” and apply slight backward and upward pressure when the dog’s name is called so that he can first rise into a sitting position at the call of his name and then on “Stand” be able to rise as before in the previous “Sit to Stand” exercise which he can by now do well. With practise the dog will first get up on the front legs and then move the back legs. Be patient while the dog finds his own comfortable way of doing the exercise. Take care not to allow any sideways movement in distance control. Some trainers have successfully taught their dogs to sit when they hear their names being called. On the command
“Bozo” he sits and “Sta-and” requires only the back legs to be moved.

The “Stand” to the “Down”:

To return from the “Stand” to the “Down”, place the right hand on the chest just below the neck, (or above the dog’s shoulders) and the left hand on the hindquarters. Give the command “Coyote Down” and press downwards and slightly backwards with both hands. This will reduce any unnecessary forward movement and encourage the dog to simply “sink” into the original “Down” position. Much patience will be needed to ensure that the dog becomes comfortable with each of the positions.

When you are ready to begin with different combinations of these positions, it is very important to allow the dog enough time to think about the new position. Do not give your commands in rapid succession. At this stage you must be close to the dog and be in a position to help the dog when he makes a mistake. If you are too far away, the dog will be distracted by your movement towards him and will not realise that he has made a mistake. Vary the starting position during training. Start from the “Stand” or “Down” or “Sit” positions alternately.

Since dogs do not understand English it is very important that you use the same tone of voice for each different exercise. For example; a short, high-pitched, “Sit”, a long, “Staa-a-nd” and a deep, “Down.” Give serious attention to start your training with a small breed dog on a tree stump or the large breed dog on a small table to prevent forward movement. The top of a landing or a terrace may also suffice.
Hand signals are very useful and may be preferred when dogs concentrate fully on the handler. Remember that you may use spoken commands (“Sit” or “Juno, Sit”) or signals (“Juno” + sit sign). You can’t use both spoken commands and signals in competition.

When you reach the proofing stage when you want the dog to follow your commands no matter what happens around it, practice regularly in different places, in all weathers and on all surfaces while you add distractions. Standing behind the dog when giving commands may be an option. This exercise calls for much patience and an early start. The younger the dog is when you start, the better.