

## The Facts

Having a successful relationship with your dog is the ultimate basis for a well trained dog

Leadership is about gentle guidance. Good leaders guide without dictating or smothering

Good Leaders don't punish mistakes, they reward successes. It is up to you to be the most interesting game in town. Don't waste time telling the dog what not to do, rather more effectively show him what to do.

Rules for behaviour are very important.

Politeness and manners ensure that everyone gets along well.

Dogs love routines - routines offer safety and security.

Key points to remember:

- Teach your dog to ask for everything he wants until it becomes second nature i.e. Sit to be served meals, sit to be let out, wait for a cue to go out of a door or other opening, sit for petting, be polite about couch and bed access. You can ask for more than a sit. For high energy dogs, teaching a default down results in more politeness.
- Raised surfaces such as human beds and couches are resources that need to be earned. They should be off-limits to any dog that you are having compliance problems (growling etc) at you. However, there is no reason to limit your dog's access to beds, couches, if you are not having such a problem. Enjoy his company there, if you desire! – on your terms – preferably wait until your dog is grown before allowing this privilege.
- Good social skills & manners are made, not born. Think about what you want your dog to learn, then, be consistent and clear about what you are teaching.

- It is fine to give a dog a lot of freedom, but first we have to prepare them for that. Initially we have to control their environment a lot and teach them what is expected. Set them up to be right, teach rules/expectations, skills and as they succeed give them more independence.  
If we give a dog (child or anyone) total freedom from the beginning, they will do what works for them and that may not work for us.
- Be in charge of play. If the excitement level is getting too high, stop play and issue a “settle” period, even if you have to leash your dog to you and sit quietly to obtain this. Reward for calm behaviour. If calm comes easy, the reward can be a return to play. Nipping/biting in a puppy is usually over excitement.
- Reward your dog every time he looks at you for direction. In the same vein, reward your dog every time he offers polite behaviour without being asked. Rewards don't mean just food. They should include praise, affection, play and life rewards, more so than food during the course of an average day. But food should definitely play a large part in rewards, especially for specific training. Good leaders lead without bribery, but they always reward lavishly! Make it the most wonderful thing in the world to please you and you will set the stage for success.
- Rewards help a dog learn that his behaviour has consequences and it gives him a feeling of control over the outcome. You are creating a happier and more confident dog, a dog that is aware of what choices he can make to get that warm and fuzzy feeling. You are also cementing a strong relationship with your dog.
- The relationship – Love alone isn't enough. Make connecting with you worthwhile, be available to the dog with your energy, smile, touch, interactions and rewards. Want 100%? Give 100%! Earn his trust and respect, teach him what to do in any given situation – Allow him to learn your world as well as his own.