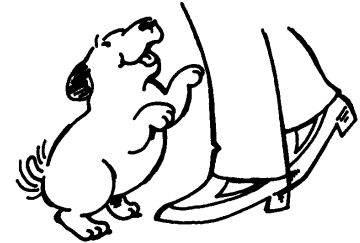


# Jumping on People



Excited, non-aggressive jumping is what we are talking about in this handout. Puppies naturally jump up on people as a way of saying hello when they are excited. Your dog probably wants to get close to your face. You inadvertently reinforce this behaviour by greeting the dog—even by saying "No!" and pushing her away. She won't care what you say or do as long as you are paying attention! Here are some ideas for how to deal with this behaviour:



### 1. MANAGEMENT - Prevent rehearsal of the behaviour

Give your dog more exercise to help release some of that jumping energy. If she jumps up on other people, put her away in another room or in a crate with a yummy stuffed frozen Kong or other favourite food-dispensing toy before you open the door and greet your friends.

As your dog is approaching you and you suspect she might jump up on you, quickly drop a handful of treats on the floor in front of her WELL BEFORE she jumps, then immediately get down to her level so there is no need for her to jump up to see you. Speak to her in a low, soft voice. This can also prevent your dog from rehearsing jumping.

While you wait for the training of an appropriate incompatible behaviour (e.g. "Sit") to become established (see below #3), reward your dog for approaching you BEFORE she jumps up – catch her doing it right, i.e. keeping her four paws on the floor, BEFORE she makes the mistake of jumping up. You have now rewarded her for APPROACHING you without jumping up! Mark the approach with four paws on the floor with your clicker or the word "Yes!" and throw some treats behind her, so that she orients away from you. If you mark too late, your dog won't have time to stop herself from jumping up, so it is important that you mark/click in a timely fashion and then quickly throw the treat(s) behind her.

### 2. REMOVE THE REWARD – Prevent rewards associated with the behaviour

This is ONLY for when management fails, because it is very difficult to teach the dog not to jump up by only doing this step. But, when management fails and the dog does jump up: Say nothing, turn away, even step away, and go about your normal business. *Do not respond in any way.* The jumping may get worse before it gets better. That's a normal response, known as an "extinction burst" and it means that what you are doing is working. Wait her out. If you give in, you will only teach her to try harder, to escalate. Ignoring her is difficult, but not impossible!

### 3. TEACH AN INCOMPATIBLE BEHAVIOUR – THE MOST IMPORTANT PART!!!

Until now, we have been trying to discourage the dog from jumping up by avoiding putting her in those situations in which she jumps up, and removing the reward (our attention) if our management fails and she does jump up. We have not yet taught her what we want her to do instead. That is the CRITICAL final step:

We need to teach a solid sit. We do this by rewarding EVERY sit that she offers, on her own, without us asking for it, ALL THROUGH THE DAY. We need to build up a solid reinforcement history for volunteered sits so that our dog learns to take responsibility for her own actions and we don't have to manage her behaviour all the time and in every situation.

Continue rewarding sits for a LONG TIME, until your dog's reinforcement history for sitting has grown larger than her past reinforcement history for jumping up. You will see when that is starting to happen, because she will be starting to offer sits in more and more different situations when she wants your attention. Continue rewarding that! When she sits, give her your full and undivided attention, as well as other rewards, like treats, part of her dinner, a toy, a game of tug, etc – whatever she wants!

Guests are often the target of your dog's mugging. In our Foundation Programme, dogs learn to go and lie on a mat or dog bed and we can teach her to do that instead of running to the door and to jump on and bark at visitors, but desensitization and counter-conditioning to door reactions is a very necessary initial step to achieve this. Your dog can also learn to sit beside you politely while you are greeting another person. These behaviours are built up gradually through the training programme, through positive reinforcement training, teaching the dog to make the correct choice on her own, without us using punishment or other aversives.

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