

Responding to Unwanted Behaviors

With clicker training, the focus is on teaching dogs what we want them to do. But how do you respond when the dog is doing something they shouldn't be? The first step to responding to an unwanted behavior is to ask yourself what is motivating the dog to perform the behavior.

What's The Motivation?

Examples of common unwanted behaviors:

JUMPING



The dog is looking for **some form of interaction** like being looked at, spoken to, touched, etc. Even negative interactions might be interpreted by the dog as a desirable interaction.

CHEWING



Some behaviors meet an immediate need for the dog such as pottying, chewing, and digging. These may provide **relief** or **access to things they enjoy**, like smells or cooler ground.

CHASING



Sometimes the behavior is motivated by something external from the dog but completely out of our control.

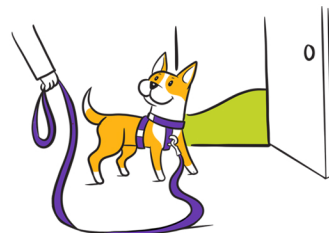
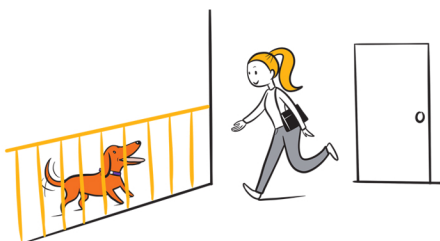
How To Respond

The motivation behind why your dog is performing the unwanted behavior can inform the appropriate way to handle an unwanted behavior.

1

Arrange the Environment

No matter the motivation, **preventing the behavior from being practiced** is always the best first approach. Practice makes perfect and you want your dog to practice the behaviors that you like.



Aids like **baby gates, crates, front-clip harnesses and more** can be used to prevent your dog from having access to the things that elicit the unwanted behavior. Providing opportunities for **appropriate outlets** for normal dog behaviors (like chewing) is another way to prevent unwanted behaviors.

2

Teach Desirable Behaviors

Even one well-trained simple behavior (like sit) can help you communicate to your dog how to respond to a certain situation in a more desirable way.

