



TEACHING NO JUMPING

Why Do Dogs Jump?

Dogs like to jump up. When young puppies want attention from their mother, they must jump up to reach her. Later the puppy wants to reach their human companions so they jump up. At first this seems cute and sweet so we reward the puppy by bending over, petting, laughing, and encouraging the puppy. Now the dog is larger and it's not so cute anymore. But we have rewarded this behavior in the past and strengthened the behavior. It's time for new rules. Consistency is crucial.

Owner Coming Home

This is one of the most common times for a dog to jump up, because they are excited to see you.

Step 1. Be prepared. If you are wearing nice clothes, get a smock to put over them and either keep it at the door or in your car. Also have treats at the door or in the car. When you are ready to enter through the door, don't have things in your arms – if you've been to the grocery store, wait until the dog is under control before bringing them in!

Step 2. Open the door. If your dog jumps, step back and close the door (with the dog on the inside and you on the outside). Do this several times. Do it immediately and without comment or reaction. To make it easier for your dog to be successful, when you first enter don't look at or greet your dog. Keep it low key. You can add the verbal greeting when he understands his new default behavior of sitting for greeting.

Step 3. You come through the door and your dog doesn't jump, or better yet, he sits! Yay! Reward, reward, reward! Do this for several days until your dog has a solid sit on first entry.

Another effective method to work on jumping if you are by yourself is to leash your dog to a heavy piece of furniture, or to an eyebolt attached to the baseboard. Walk up to your dog in a calm manner; if your dog jumps up, spin around and walk 10-15 feet away. Don't say "no!" or reprimand for jumping. This method trains your dog to think and learn instead of always having to be told what to do.

After turning and walking away, pause for about 5 seconds before returning to your dog. Keep quietly repeating this tactic until (finally!) when you approach your dog he sits instead of jumping! Quickly reward and praise (or click and reward if you are using a clicker). Hint: Try not to ask for the sit. If you don't get an immediate sit, wait for a moment and allow your dog to think through the interaction. The lesson will sink in better if your dog comes up with the correct behavior instead of you always guiding him.



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Dog Jumping on Strangers on the Street

Enlist two or three helpers for a 10-minute training session. You walk the dog clockwise around the block, while the helpers walk counter-clockwise. When the dog meets the first helper and jumps up, the helper acts like he's completely offended and appalled – gasping and moving away. Then you give the “sit” command and reward with a treat when your dog sits while the helper greets him warmly and then continues on. Repeat with the various helpers until the dog sits each time a helper approaches.

Dog Jumping on Visitors

Get a helper to do the exercises described in the “Owner Coming Home” exercise. An even better idea is to invite several people over and have them take turns doing the exercises then have a party. The entrance fee to the party is making the dog behave. Just a couple of sessions can make a huge difference in your dog's jumping.

Some Other Options

1. You can teach the dog a sit-stay, or go to your mat, with the cue being the doorbell.
2. Teach the dog to bring a toy when the doorbell rings, and then have the visitor (or yourself) throw it for the dog.
3. Use your imagination about how to keep your dog from jumping.

Training Tips:

- Don't tell your dog to “Get Down”. Use the correct cue, “Off”. Down means something entirely different.
- If your dog jumps on you while you're seated, don't push him off. Simply turn your head away and stand up angled away. When he slides off, sit down again. Repeat as needed. Reward your dog when he sits politely.

Don't Push Your Dog Down Or Knee Him In The Chest: When you do either of these things, you may be inadvertently rewarding your dog for jumping up. If your dog is jumping for attention and you talk to him or touch him, you may be giving him the attention he is looking for. Also, there is no need to teach no-jump using punishment. We want to reward success and try to ignore failure. This will help maintain a level of trust in your relationship

Be Consistent: Not to get too technical, but a random or variable reinforcement schedule creates a stronger behavior. If sometimes the dog gets what he wants by jumping (even though you may not realize you are rewarding him), then he is on a random reinforcement schedule and it will make the jumping a stronger behavior. The biggest stumbling block for training a dog to sit instead of jump is consistency. Everyone must participate. Jumping up should never be rewarded.