

Dogs That Play and Exercise a Lot Are Friendlier, Healthier, and Less Likely To Have Behavior Problems!



A Tired Dog Is a Good Dog! Dogs that don't get enough playtime with their families make up their own games (and that usually ends up causing trouble). Dogs that are kept in the yard all the time feel removed from their pack and need someone to play with. If your dog is outside because she misbehaves in the house, chances are she's not getting enough exercise. Try teaching your dog to fetch a ball or play frisbee or take her jogging or hiking with you. You will see a big difference in her behavior on the days you really play with her. Remember... a tired dog is a good dog!

Bundles of Energy - Young dogs have lots of energy to burn and certain working, sporting, and herding breeds (especially collies, terriers, spaniels, setters, huskies, dalmations, and retrievers) need jobs to do to keep them busy. If your dog belongs to one of these groups (even if she's a mix), it's especially important to keep her well-exercised.

Training for Dogs and People! Your dog can't understand English, but she can learn to do many things on command. Training your dog will take time and patience, but going to a training class at the Training Center at MHS can help you and your dog in many ways:

1. You will learn to understand and handle your dog.
2. You will learn what you can expect from your dog and she will learn what she can expect from you.
3. Your dog will learn good manners and maybe even some cool tricks.
4. Your dog will get to interact with all kinds of people and other dogs.
5. You will have a canine companion that is a pleasure to be around.

Make Training Fun! You should never have to inflict pain on your dog, although some trainers will tell you to. Positive (and fun) training classes are held regularly at The Training Center at MHS - and you'll get an alumni discount! If you'd like help finding or choosing a class or if you want information about training on your own, please call us for ideas. Look for a trainer who has good communication skills and treats students (2- and 4-legged) with respect. The Training Center at MHS is proud of having Certified Pet Dog Trainers (CPDTs) teaching classes and having an Associate Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist on staff.

Follow These Training Tips To Teach Your Dog Good Manners at Home:

Jumping Up: Although jumping up is usually a friendly gesture, it's a good idea to discourage this habit right from the start. When your dog jumps up, ignore her completely - don't make eye contact or look at her, don't talk to her, and don't touch her. Fold your arms across your chest and turn your head or body away from her. Any attention directed to her at all, whether positive or negative in your eyes, is a reward to her. When your dog is back on the ground and is quiet and relaxed, give her



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lots of attention and praise. Just as you want to discourage the unwanted jumping, don't forget to encourage good behavior - remember to reward your dog when she is being good and lying quietly or playing by herself! **Ask visitors to do the same** - Only pay attention to your dog when she is sitting or standing politely. This will teach her not to jump up on **any** humans. (For extra exuberant dogs, you might need the help of the leash to keep all four feet on the ground.)

Chewing: Dogs chew for many reasons - the most common one is to get someone to pay attention to them (by speaking to, looking at, or touching them). Think of your dog at home alone, waiting for some attention from you. She chews on her toys, then the coffee table but as she is chewing on the couch, you come home. You come in the house, look at your dog, speak to her (yelling works too), and touch her when you grab her collar. Then you take her over to the couch where she's been chewing so she knows exactly what brought you home. No matter what punishment you try, your dog will not associate it with chewing the couch, because that behavior has just been rewarded by you returning home!



To get your dog to chew on her toys, spend time playing with your dog and her toys. Make them fun and interesting to her. Pay attention to and praise her when she's playing with her toys. Find safe, sturdy chew toys that your dog likes, because chewing is a natural way for her to relieve stress, boredom, and discomfort from teething. Make one toy special for when you leave your dog alone, such as a hollow toy or bone stuffed with canned dog food or peanut butter. (Freeze the toy with the stuffing inside to make the game even more challenging, or for a refreshing treat in the summer. Many toys can be cleaned in the dishwasher or with a baby bottle brush to remove any residue left behind.) Give her this toy only when you go out. Look for toys such as the Buster Cube®, a Kong® Toy, or a Busy Buddy®, that can occupy your dog while you are away.

Drop It - Teaching your dog "drop it" will allow you to safely get any object from her. To teach your dog to give you a toy she has, present a tasty treat and say "drop it." When she puts the toy down to take the treat, praise her and hand her the treat as you pick up the toy. Immediately give her toy back and play some more. Your dog will think this is a great game... "I get to play with this toy, stop and get a treat, and play some more." Repeat this process until she drops the toy when you say "drop it." Use the same method to get other objects away from her. Never try to take a toy - or anything else - from your dog by reaching into her mouth.

Mouthing and Biting... are not OK!! (Unless your puppy is under 4 months, in which case, skip to the next paragraph). If your new dog is mouthing or biting people, call MHS immediately. Stop play as soon as mouthing starts and take a time out. There are simple ways to curb this behavior if you catch it right away - but it's a dangerous behavior if you let it go.



Do not try to stop this behavior using force or punishment - even yelling could actually make this behavior worse!!!

Puppy mouthing is normal for two reasons: 1) Puppies learn about others and their environment



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through their mouths and 2) pups are teething until they're about five months old. When your puppy bites you, make a loud, sudden noise of pain "OUCH!!!" She will soon learn that humans are very wimpy and dogs can't bite them - even when playing.



Dogs bite or mouth for different reasons than puppies. DO NOT try this technique with dogs six months or older - it will increase their biting and it will hurt!

Teach Your Children Well.

The best way to teach your children to be responsible pet owners is for you to take excellent care of your pets. Your children will follow your lead. Take your children to training classes with you and learn how to help your dog get along with kids (and vice versa) by reading *Childproofing Your Dog* by Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson. **ALWAYS** supervise interactions between pets and kids, even once your new dog has become a regular part of your household.

