



Savvy Dogs

Training News

Effective training solutions for a better behaved dog

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✦ Highlights ✦

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Let Sleeping Humans Lie...

Some dogs don't appreciate a good lie-in—or know the difference between workdays and weekends. Young puppies and senior dogs can't be expected to hold it all night and are legitimately excused, but adult dogs should know better. If your dog has taken it upon himself to be your personal alarm clock, here are some tips:



Visit the vet. The first step is always to rule out a urinary tract infection or other medical conditions that might be causing bladder discomfort.

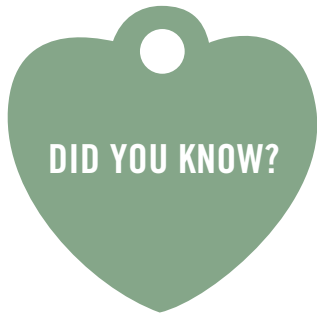
Increase the workouts. It can't be said often enough: a tired dog is a well-behaved dog. This includes early morning manners. More time spent hiking the trails, chasing a ball, and playing with friends at the park or doggie daycare may well translate into a full night's sleep.

Delay evening toilette. Make your dog's last potty trip as late as you can and if he gets an evening meal, serve it on the early side. If you'll pardon the mental image, it gives the food more time to travel through the system. That way, you can be reasonably sure he isn't desperate to go in the morning.

Don't feed first thing. If your dog knows that one of the first things you attend to in the morning is his breakfast, you have provided powerful motivation for him to get you out of bed. Don't set this trap for yourself and if you already have, change it.

Don't reinforce the alarm-clock habit. When the pawing or whining begins, turn onto the other side (provided, as per the previous tip, you're fairly certain it isn't a potty emergency). Whatever you do, don't reinforce your dog's behavior by acknowledging it with eye contact, soothing noises, a groan of exasperation, a scratch on the head, or—worst of all—by getting up.

**"Dogs are not our whole life,
but they make our lives whole."
- Roger Caras**



These Doggie World Records?

Smallest living dog.

Boo Boo the Chihuahua, who stands 4 inches tall and weighs 24 ounces.

Biggest living dog.

The aptly named Giant George, a Great Dane, who is 43 inches tall and clocks the scale at 245 pounds.

Largest eyeballs.

Bruschi the Boston terrier won a place in the history books for eyeballs that measure 1.1 inches in diameter.

Longest tongue.

Belongs to Puggy the Pekingese and is a whopping 4.5 inches long.

Longest ears.

Sit on Harbor, a black-and-tan coonhound, and measure respectively 12.25 inches (left) and 13.5 inches (right).



A WORLD OF DOGS

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To Be Or Not To Be... A Dog's Dog

We all want our dogs to play nice with other dogs—and shouldn't it come naturally? Dogs are social, after all. So why does an otherwise sweet-natured canine buddy turn into a killjoy at the park? Well, dogs can be introverts, too. Like humans, they can have bad days and they occasionally form instant dislikes to new dogs. But where we get to choose our friends and are free to avoid anyone we can't stand, dogs pretty much have to go wherever we take them. What's more, they are territorial creatures, protective of their favorite things, their home turf, and us. Adding another dog to the equation, familiar or not, always holds the potential for fireworks.



Why are some dogs more social than others? Genetics and breed play a role, and so does early socialization. Here, too, the human analogy is apt. Some of us come out of the womb gregarious, others are born shy and unsure of how to negotiate the dynamics of social groups. We also are greatly affected by our earliest experiences. An otherwise confident and social child finding herself the target of bullies on the playground could be forever changed as a result. Similarly, dogs are the sum of their parts: DNA and experiences thrown into a pot. Some herding or hunting breeds, for example, were bred for the ability to work independently and might find playtime at the park a monumental waste of time.

If a dog's anti-social tendencies go beyond polite disinterest, adult socialization is an option. Working through a program to build positive associations to other dogs using rewards and comfortable distances can greatly improve relations between a dog and her peers. But if a dog is civil to most dogs, but doesn't play or gets grumpy when approached by bouncy youngsters, a bit of situational awareness might be all that's needed: favoring open spaces and less-busy trails for walks, crossing the street if there isn't room to circumnavigate another dog on a sidewalk, etc. After all, why shouldn't dogs be allowed to be who they really are?

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DOGS IN ACTION

Goose Management

In many parts of the country, populations of nonmigratory Canada geese have become a public nuisance. These adaptable birds colonize areas that offer open, green vegetation and permanent water—for example golf courses, college or office campuses, city parks, housing developments,



greenbelts, and recreational areas. The geese cause a number of problems for the landowners or communities they invade. They damage crops and green spaces by grazing and trampling seedlings, and by the sheer amount of droppings they leave. The droppings degrade water quality and may cause excess algae growth. Flocks of geese are also often involved in car collisions or in hazardous situations at airports.

Enter the goose management dog. In what's a thriving niche business, specially trained dogs—usually herding dog breeds like Border Collies—harass the geese several times a day at carefully chosen times of the year, i.e. before nest construction and egg laying. Harassment may sound bad, but is in fact a wholly humane practice when done right. The dogs are trained never to harm the birds, who simply dislike continual disturbance enough that they give up and leave the area.



HEALTHY DOG

When Dogs Eat Greenery

It's a rare dog that never partakes of a tender stalk of juicy grass—and some dogs practically graze. Dogs are omnivores and it's likely their diet in the wild would include fruit, berries, seeds, herbs, and a variety of grasses (despite lacking the enzyme to digest grass). On occasion, grass-eating is an attempt to induce vomiting or otherwise soothe a digestive issue, and it's speculated that dogs also instinctively seek out certain herbs as a cure for other ailments. Because of the connection with gastric upset, it's always worth paying extra attention if your dog suddenly develops a ravenous appetite for grass. Look for vomiting that lasts more than a few days, blood or mucus in the stool, and lethargy. Any of those should trigger a visit to the vet for a full checkup.

Absent any other symptoms, don't worry if your dog snacks on the foliage—and perhaps a bit of soil in the bargain. If nothing else, it's good roughage.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Boxer

Theories abound about the Boxer's name—did it come from the alleged tendency to stand on hind legs and “box”? Is it a permutation of a German word? Whatever the answer, the Boxer we know today is a smaller, faster version of a Mastiff-like working dog used for deer and boar hunting in 19th century Germany. Depending on the day, Boxers can be clownishly silly or stoically dignified. These versatile middleweight athletes are among the top 10 of popular breeds in the US, Canada, and many other countries, and no wonder. They excel at work (from police duty to service jobs), at play (from Schutzhund to agility), and at home—despite the brachycephalic breed's propensity for snoring. Boxers are energetic, easy to motivate, prone to exuberance, and famous for their patience with kids. The Boxer fan club over the centuries includes artists (Pablo Picasso), baseball players (Joe DiMaggio), musicians (Nat King Cole), and actors (Humphrey Bogart).

To re-home a Boxer, visit your local shelter or rescue group.



OUR SERVICES



How To Reduce Your Dog's Carbon Paw Print

Dogs have quite an impact on the environment. America's estimated 73 million dogs produce around 10 million tons of poop annually—and no, far from everyone scoops. Then there's the product packaging for dog products (the pet food bags alone...), not to mention the heaps of brightly colored plastic toys that end up as landfill.

Fortunately, there's much you can do:

- Use biodegradable poop bags and always clean up after your dog.
- Dispose of drugs, pesticides, shampoos, and chemicals safely.
- Choose products with no or minimal packaging and check any packaging for recycling information.
- Buy local (or at least American), green or natural products, including high-quality food.
- Use stainless steel or ceramic food and water bowls.



Savvy Dogs, LLC

Effective training solutions for a better behaved dog

Serving western Montgomery County, including Poolesville, Potomac, Darnestown, Gaithersburg, Germantown, North Potomac, Boyds and Clarksburg.

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