



Savvy Dogs Training News

Effective training solutions for a better behaved dog

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✦ Highlights ✦

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LIVING WITH DOGS

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The Great Crate

The crate is a marvelous tool: Good for short stints of alone time and for getting your dog to settle down, great for house-training and travel. Worried a crate is just one step up from imprisonment? No need. Like coyotes and wolves, dogs are den animals that enjoy close quarters. That said, it would be unkind to simply deposit a dog in a crate if he's never seen one before—it would also likely trigger loud and long-lasting objections. Here are some tips for making the great crate a success:



Use irresistible treats. Treats, comestible and in toy form, are the way to get your dog to fall in love with his crate. Stock up on liver treats, Natural Balance, chicken bits, or whatever makes your dog sit up and take notice. Make sure you have a favorite toy or chewie set aside for crate training time, and don't break out that particular goody for anything else.

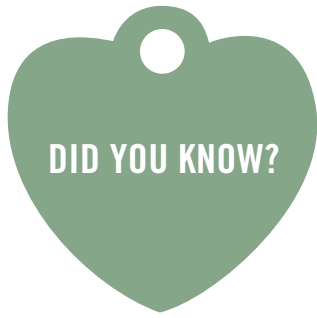
Go slow. Only gradually increase the amount of time you ask your dog to spend in the crate during crate training. Likewise for the amount of time you leave him alone in the crate once he's used to it. Going slowly is the key to success. Remember, you're building a positive association to last a canine lifetime.

Exercise first. Make sure your dog has had a good workout before each crate training session. Crate training goes faster and works better if your dog has worked up an appetite and—for when you get far enough in the training program to leave him alone in there—is nice and tired and ready for a snooze.

Note: Never leave your dog in the crate for more than 3–4 hours at a time, except for bedtime.

"A good dog
is one of the best things
of all to be."

- Dean Koontz



These Pet-Friendly Budget Hotels?

Chain	Pet-friendly locations
Motel 6	900
La Quinta Inns & Suites	700+
Red Roof Inn	340
Best Western	1,000+
Comfort Inn	550
Holiday Inn	450
EconoLodge	380
Americas Best Value Inn	400
Quality Inn	300
Travelodge	300

To find a hotel on your route, visit petswelcome.com



A WORLD OF DOGS

The Special Bond

You're not imagining it. Your dog really does understand what you're feeling. Dogs can't read our minds, no, but when it often seems like they do, it's because of a special connection between our two species that's increasingly well understood. Dogs don't just seem attuned to our emotions. They are. Eye-track studies of dogs have shown that they read human faces for emotional cues in the same way we ourselves do. No other species do this, not even chimps. Scientists speculate that this skill has evolved in dogs to enable them to communicate with us on an emotional level. To better understand us. Which makes sense. When you rely on humans for your survival, there's obvious biological advantage to reading their moods for signs of intentions, impending danger, etc.



The same goes for barking. Wolves rarely bark, and when they do, it's to warn other pack members. Dogs, on the other hand, possess an impressive vocal repertoire that spans yowls, yelps, grumbles, whines, acoustic sighs, and many types of barks, suggesting another trait dogs may have developed exclusively to strengthen their teamwork with humans. This goes beyond utilitarian purposes like herding and protecting our livestock. Arguably, dogs have learned to speak a second language specifically to support their bond with us.

And the connection goes both ways: We've become skilled interpreters of barks. In experiments in which researchers played recordings of dog barks to dog guardians, they were capable of distinguishing between request barking, anxious barking, territorial barking, and other kinds, without seeing the dog's body language or the situation. We use the tonality, frequency, and interval of barks to decode the message.

So, the science backs us up: We do indeed have a special bond with dogs. It's so strong that we mostly take it for granted and lump dogs in with the rest of the family—because they are family. But dogs are not human. They are remarkable, adaptive creatures that have evolved in partnership with us in a way no other species have. And that's pretty special.

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DOGS IN ACTION

Dock Jumping

Water-loving dogs have been jumping off docks to retrieve sticks, swim with their people, or simply splash about in the cool, wet stuff as long as there have been dogs and docks. But as an organized competition, dock jumping, also known as dock diving, debuted in the 1998 Purina Incredible Dog Challenge. In the fourteen years since then, it has developed into a nationwide craze featured everywhere from ESPN to *The Wall Street Journal*. Easy to understand and dramatic to watch, dock jumping is a very spectator-friendly sport, which often draws big crowds.



There are several different kinds of dock diving competitions—including longest jump, highest jump, and speediest retrieve—and new ones are being invented all the time. At the time of writing, the record for the longest jump is 28 feet, 10 inches. Any person over 7 years of age can participate and all types of dogs are welcome.

To get involved, search online for a dock jumping club or group near you. Alternatively, read up on the rules and simply practice yourself. For listings of competitions, your search engine is again the go-to resource. A good place to start is www.dockdogs.com.



HEALTHY DOG

Tellington TTouch

Think of this canine bodywork method as Feldenkrais for animals. Developed by animal expert Linda Tellington, TTouch is a non-invasive approach that uses gentle manipulation, movement, and tools to improve concentration, coordination, behavior, and athletic ability in animals. The signature circular touches (which carry exotic names like ‘Lick of the Cow’s Tongue’) are thought to activate the parasympathetic nervous system in a way that slows heart rate and lowers stress levels. In this relaxed state, the dog learns a new body awareness, even new behavior patterns.

TTouch is used widely around the world by animal trainers, veterinarians, and pet owners. The technique has been shown to ease pain and discomfort, speed up post-op recovery, and help with behavior problems. Interested? Search online for a practitioner—or take a course so you can TTouch your dog anytime.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Rottweiler

These robust black-and-mahogany dreadnoughts were originally herders. Rottweiler ancestors are known to have herded and protected the livestock of the Roman armies forging through Europe for conquest, and herding can still be found on their job description. But modern-day Rotties do many other kinds of work, including Search and Rescue, guiding the blind, police work, and cart pulling. Their storied past and anvil-forged physique have earned Rotties a reputation as the gladiators of the canine world—a fiction not helped by starring roles as evil minions in movies like 1976 hit, *The Omen*. Fortunately, many more recent screen appearances have better portrayed the peaceful, laid-back, and downright clownish side of Rotties (*Lethal Weapon 3*, HBO’s *Entourage*). Rotties can consistently be found among the top 20 of the AKC’s list of most popular breeds.

To share your home with a Rottie, search online for rescue organizations near you.



OUR SERVICES



How To Prevent Car Sickness

Car travel is our favorite way to travel with dogs: Every year, 29 million Americans take their dogs on car trips of 50 miles or longer. But a carsick dog can spoil the joy of travel for canine and human passengers alike. To prevent or minimize motion sickness in your dog, try these tips:

- Feed your dog a light meal three to four hours before your departure time. (And don't feed your dog in a moving car, even if it's a long trip.)
- Try limiting your dog's view of the outside by covering his travel crate with a towel.
- Keep the car cool and well ventilated. Cracking a window can help, too.
- Ask your vet about motion sickness aids. If medicating your dog concerns you, look into the many natural options on the market.



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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