

Your complete guide to natural dog care and training



Whole Dog Journal™



On page 18. Just the best puppy toys – After months of product testing and play, we can finally share our top picks for the year in toys, training tools, beds, and more.



On page 3. Are you in or out? – The joys and hazards of dog parks.



On page 14. Emotional rescue – It's not just training that needs to happen.

3 *In the issue*

PROS & CONS OF DOG PARKS

Fenced areas where dogs are welcome to run and play off-leash can provide an outlet for your dog's overabundant energy – or a place to practice undesirable social behavior.

7

DIGESTIBILITY MATTERS

A lab test may find that your dog's food contains all the nutrients she needs – but are they present in an adequately digestible form? And, if so, wouldn't a dog food maker want to advertise that?

10

A STEP UP FOR SENIOR DOGS

If jumping down from a bed or couch is difficult and painful for your arthritic dog, the right set of pet stairs may provide just the right "crutch."

14

SECOND THAT EMOTION?

An excerpt from *Beyond the Basics: Unlock Your Dog's Behavior* explains how your dog's emotions affect his ability to learn (and your ability to teach!).

18

GEAR OF THE YEAR

2018's best dog-training and dog-care tools, toys, beds, and more.

2 Editor's Note

24 Resources



Like us!
facebook.com/
wholedogjournal



Find us!
online at
wholedogjournal.com



Email us!
editors @
wholedogjournal.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Nancy Kerns

TRAINING EDITOR

Pat Miller

PUBLISHER

Timothy H. Cole

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

Greg King

EDITORIAL OFFICE

WDJEditor@gmail.com

1655 Robinson Street

Oroville, CA 95965

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

(800) 829-9165

whole-dog-journal.com/cs

PO Box 8535

Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

CANADA: Box 7820 STN Main

London, Ontario N5Y 5W1

REPRINTS

For price quote, contact

Jennifer Jimolka at (203) 857-3144

Minimum order 1,000

NEWSSTAND

Jocelyn Donnellon, (203) 857-3100

**WHOLE DOG JOURNAL DOES NOT
ACCEPT COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING**

Belvoir *Whole Dog Journal* (ISSN #1097-5322) is published monthly by Belvoir Media Group, LLC, 535 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854. Robert Englander, Chairman and CEO; Timothy H. Cole, Executive Vice President, Editorial Director; Philip L. Penny, Chief Operating Officer; Greg King, Executive Vice President, Marketing Director; Ron Goldberg, Chief Financial Officer; Tom Canfield, Vice President, Circulation. Periodicals postage paid at Norwalk, CT and at additional mailing offices. Copyright ©2018, Belvoir Media Group, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited. Printed in U.S.A. Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658. Canada Publishing Agreement Number #40016479.

Whole Dog Journal makes every effort to provide information on dog health, care, and treatment that is authoritative, reliable, and practical. It is not intended, however, to replace diagnosis or treatment from a veterinarian or other qualified dog professional.

Whole Dog Journal does not assume any legal responsibility. Readers should always consult qualified healthcare providers for specific diagnosis and treatment.

Subscriptions: \$39 annually (12 issues). Bulk rate subscriptions for organizations and educational institutions available upon request.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to

Whole Dog Journal,

PO Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

In Canada, send address changes to

Whole Dog Journal,

PO Box 39, Norwich, ON, N0J 1P0



Quiet Time

Here's hoping that our move to the edge of town will mean less barking, all around.

Unless something blows up in the next few days, there will be a new editorial office address listed in the masthead, to the immediate left, in the next issue of WDJ. My husband and I are in the last days of escrow on a new house on the outskirts of town, just a few miles away from where we live now.

We have been living in the historic downtown of this Gold Rush-era town for the past 11 years. There have been some wonderful benefits of living in an old neighborhood in a cute, old small town. I could go out my front gate with my dogs and walk four blocks to a paved trail alongside the Feather River, which flows right through town. The historic center of Oroville is a bit like a ghost town at night; there are no businesses, not even bars, that stay open past 10 p.m., so on hot summer nights, the dogs could safely walk with me off-leash downtown. When I'm on deadline and don't have time to take Woody out for a miles-long hike to wear him down, I often walk him at night to a grassy area that surrounds some government buildings downtown (two blocks from my house!), to play fetch with a glow-in-the-dark ball.

But living downtown has also had some drawbacks. From the day we adopted Otto from our local shelter nine years ago, it's been a challenge to keep him from barking to alert us to every UPS, FedEx, and U.S. Postal Service truck that drives within a block of our house. And since we live across from the town's YMCA, people park in front of our house to attend classes or swim in the Y's pool. When they get in and out of their cars, Otto thinks he should let us know this, too. The main post office in town is on the next block, and lots of apparently suspicious-looking people walk by our house every day to pick up their mail. Otto does not let this go unremarked.

If I'm in the same room or part of the yard as Otto when these "alarming" events happen, Otto will usually just let out a soft growl; then he will look at me, to make sure I'm aware that he's done his job. I acknowledge this; "Thanks, buddy. That's enough." And that's it. But if Otto is alone outside when, in his view, any of these potential home-invaders skulk by, he lets out a full-throated "ARROOOOOOO!" and follows up with some ferocious barking.

Before you feel too sorry for my neighbors, you should know that there is a Dachshund next door who launches into fits of shrieky barking any time we open our front gate, or upon any appearance by any human or non-human animal (dogs, cats, chickens) in our own backyard. And the neighbors across the back fence have two dogs that live outdoors 24/7/365; they can hardly be blamed for their boredom-based barking.

Anyway, wish us luck. If all goes as planned, we and our dogs will be sleeping through the night for the first time in years!

NK





CONSUMER
ALERT

Pros and Cons of Dog Parks

Fenced areas where dogs are welcome to run and play off-leash can provide an outlet for your dog's overabundant energy – or a place to practice undesirable social behavior.



In recent years, more and more dog training and behavior professionals are speaking out against dog parks – yes, those safely fenced, community-funded spaces where dogs and their humans can get together and have a good time. What's not to like?

If you ask almost any trainer, she will likely say, "Plenty!" As dog parks have become more common (and, indeed, as dog ownership has been on the rise in the past decade) they have somehow morphed from being something that local dog owners band together and fight to

build, to places where few really knowledgeable owners care to take their dogs. It seems everyone has a horror story to tell about "that day at the dog park," featuring overstimulated dogs running amok, dogs practicing bully behaviors, dog fights, and even dog deaths.

It's true that all of those horrible things can happen at dog parks, but a lot of good things happen in dog parks, too, especially when they are well-constructed and well-managed, and when park users are smart about bringing appropriate dogs to the park and providing adequate supervision. Dog parks are a lifesaver for the owners of many dogs who need a little extra exercise and outdoor stimulation in order to be able to relax and behave well at home.

So do you take your dog to your local dog park or not? How do you know if you should? Or shouldn't? Just as with so many other dog training and behavior questions, it depends!

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING

There are a number of factors that determine whether a dog park is a good choice for your canine companion:

1 Your dog's play preferences. Does your dog *love* to play with other dogs? Not all dogs do. Yes, they are a social species; that doesn't mean they all get along. We humans are

This is the dog-park dream: Exuberant dogs running and playing with joyous abandon, then coming home with you tired and content. But anyone who has spent much time at a dog park can attest that it's only sometimes like this; just as often, one can see unhappy, anxious dogs, dogs being targeted by "playground bullies," and even dog fights.

What you can do

- Evaluate your dog carefully and honestly before taking her to a dog park.
- Consider your dog-park choices thoroughly before taking your dog there.
- Discuss the pros and cons of your area dog parks with your favorite local dog training and behavior professional(s).
- Consider alternatives to dog parks, such as getting together with other dog owners in your area and creating compatible playgroups that meet in fenced backyards.

also a social species, and we certainly don't get along with all humans!

If your dog is a confident, social butterfly, she might be a good dog park candidate. If she's fearful around other dogs, she will be much happier *not* going to the park. (Consider, too, that her fear will likely deepen with every bad experience.) Some dogs are perfectly content with a small circle of intimate canine friends. Other dogs prefer the company of their human companions

over *any* other canines. Bringing a dog who doesn't enjoy the company of other dogs into an off-leash playground isn't fair to your dog or any others who may approach her.

2 Your dog's play style. You need some awareness of what sort of play best suits your dog in order to gauge whether a particular park at a particular time of day is likely to provide her with an enjoyable play ses-

sion or set her up to be traumatized (or traumatize others). Consider what your dog likes to do, and plan accordingly.

For example: Is your dog a fetchaholic? If her preference is to chase balls in a huge open space without being chased or pestered by any other dogs, bringing her to a cramped or crowded park might just set her up to snap at any unwary dog who gets in her way or tries to compete for the ball.

Consider the other typical dog park

Dog-Park Opinions from Professional Trainers

We asked several of our favorite dog training and behavior professionals how they feel about dog parks.

KELLY FAHEY, PMCT2

The DogSmith of Hunterdon, Pittstown, New Jersey

"I love the concept of dog parks. They sound great; you get to take your dogs to run and play. They get to meet and make doggie friends. What a wonderful way to obtain much-needed exercise for your dog and to keep your dog socialized.

"Peel back the curtain and you find it's not what it seems. My clients have told me about so many bad experiences – things that impacted their dogs and things that they've seen happen. My clients who have been involved in some sort of incident at a dog park often feel like it was their fault, as if they did something wrong. They are relieved to learn that it wasn't necessarily their fault, that the environment isn't usually stacked in their favor. I explain why I'm not a fan of dog parks, and suggest alternatives such as walking on the many trails that we have out here in the country.

"A dog was killed at one of our local dog parks this year. There was a breach in the fence that you couldn't really see. There was brush and some other greenery covering it. The dog got out and ran into the road."

ALEX BOND

YTiny Pets Dog Training and Walking, Annapolis, Maryland

"I want so badly for dog parks to be good but I consider them to be such an uncontrolled gamble. I always suggest they be avoided. Things go bad so fast, unless you have a regular, familiar group playing together. You can try to stay aware and leave if problems arise, but in my experience, problems come

in the gate and happen before you can react. People and dogs are harmed, and often the wrong dogs are blamed. The parks are a risk I've deemed unworthy except in extraordinary circumstances."

CINDY MAURO, CPDT-KA

Cindy Mauro Dog Training, West Milford, New Jersey

"I don't recommend that people to go to dog parks. I have witnessed fights – and no one knew what to do. I've also observed people on their phones and not paying attention to their dogs. That said, people need a way to exercise their energetic dogs, and they may not have a lot of options. In these cases, I explain to them the importance of watching what is going on, much as you would a child in a playground. I go over the warning signs that things aren't going well, and how to know when it's time to get your dog and leave. You have to pay attention to the surroundings and act as your dog's advocate."



SUSAN KAMINSKY, CPDT-KA, PMCT

The Country Dog, LLC, Norwalk, Connecticut

"Dog parks are sometimes good but often ugly. My Collie Zig Zag loved socializing with every human in the park. My Collie Maddie would happily run and play and fetch sticks, but was once attacked by two small dogs. Although she reacted appropriately – with lots of noise so it sounded scary – she was blamed. And I once saw two intact Bulldogs attack an elderly Golden Retriever. My local park is considering registering dogs and separating the small dogs."

visitors, too. Does your dog *love* to play with other rowdy, rough-and-tumble brawlers at the park? That's great if you can meet up with folks whose dogs enjoy that, too. But if your dog overwhelms other park visitors with his level of energy and arousal, it's not fair to inflict your dog's inappropriate play on them. Other dogs (and their owners) will not care that your dog is "just playing" if, while minding their own business, they get bowled over and

hurt; they may respond with a dramatic protest and trigger an aggressive retort from the over-aroused roughouser.

3 Your dog's training. To be fair to other park users, and in order to be able to keep your own dog safe, your dog should at *least* have a dynamite recall so you can call her back to you when you see trouble brewing. A full range of well-trained good manners behaviors is even better!

4 Dog park construction. There are dog parks, and then there are *dog parks*. A well-constructed dog park is several acres or larger, solidly fenced, ideally with amenities that include water, equipment to play on, and varied terrain, such as open fields, creeks, and woods, so dogs have plenty to keep them environmentally engaged, rather than just pestering each other. Parks that are small, overcrowded and boring greatly increase the likelihood of

SUSAN SANDERSON, PMCT-2

Your Dog's Friend, Arlington, Virginia, and Joyful Dog, Leesburg, Virginia

"One of my clients lives with his adolescent Lab in a tiny basement apartment in Washington, D.C. He knew the dog park had risks, but he felt it was the only way to regularly get his dog the exercise she needed. We had discussed things like going to empty fields and using a long-line as well as hiking on the weekends and playing lots of brain games, but he really wanted to be able to do the dog park thing a few times a week.

"We agreed that if he could commit to a few things – such as training a great recall, understanding what his responsibilities were at the park, and getting better at reading other dogs' body language – we could work on getting them as prepared as possible. He worked like a fiend on his dog's recall, and when I went to the park with them after a few months, he could call that dog off of anything and everything. He also has made a super effort to learn more about dog body language and I saw him watching everything like a hawk. But I think he's the outlier!"

LISA MARINO, CPDT-KA, PMCT, KPA-CTP

Head of the Class Dog Training LLC, Winchester, Virginia

"One way dog owners can make the dog park a better experience is to not allow their dogs to congregate at entrances and exits. Often, owners let their dogs excitedly rush up to any new dog who comes in. If everyone called their dogs back so the new guy could

come in and be released, they could greet more naturally instead of a mob scene.

"Another way to make the park experience better is to keep moving with the dogs. Instead of standing around in clumps, walk the perimeter and encourage your dog to sniff and run with you or near you. Encourage your dog to run off and play and romp briefly, come back, go away again – and keep moving. Often, if the owners keep moving, the dogs will, too.

"I do have some clients who use dog parks successfully. Some use the park before anyone else comes. As soon as someone else pulls into the parking area, they leash up their dogs and leave."

BOB RYDER, PMCT-3, CPDT-KA

Pawsitive Transformations, Bloomington, Illinois

"In a perfect world, dog parks would be staffed with 'lifeguards' who are skillful at interpreting canine body language and coaching handlers when/how to intervene before problems get out of hand. I'd love to see privately owned dog parks where people can bring their dogs for a modest fee and agree in advance to rules for visiting the park. Short of that, I recommend prearranged play dates with dogs who are well-known and possess good social skills."

JACKIE MOYANO, CPDT-KA, PMCT

Coventry School for Dogs, Columbia, Maryland, and Humane Rescue Alliance, Washington, D.C.

"I encourage clients to create small neighborhood dog play dates, like the one we call Lunch Bunch in my neighborhood. We rotate to different backyards with the same group of dogs throughout the week. Sometimes we walk them in the woods. We know the play styles, quirks, and health status of all the dogs."



inappropriate canine behavior (fights). Other important park features include separate areas for small and large dogs and double-gated entrances so dogs can't escape as newcomers arrive.

5 Dog park management. Every good dog park needs rules and someone to enforce them. Municipal parks, usually under the auspices of the parks and recreation department, may fall short on management. Rarely is there someone in attendance to deal with conflicts that may arise. City and county dog parks often compete with tennis courts, ball fields, playgrounds, and picnic areas for park staff attention.

Privately owned dog parks are more likely to have staff in attendance to assist in a timely manner with conflict resolution (canine and human) and enforcement of rules. Some parks require registration and issue numbered armbands that owners must wear while in the park, for more effective reporting and investigation of problems.

6 Dog park maintenance. Dog fights aren't the only threat to your dog's safety at a park. Poorly maintained fences and equipment can injure and kill dogs as easily as dog-dog altercations. Grass should be regularly mowed, and needed repairs promptly and routinely made. Make sure your park is getting its fair share of the park-maintenance budget!

7 Dog park culture. This is the human side of things. If most owners are chatting with each other or on cell phones, rather than supervising their dogs' activities, there are bound to be problems. If owners are oblivious to their dogs' inappropriate behavior and allow mounting, bullying, and aggression to go uninterrupted, it's not a healthy place for you and your dog to hang out.

Consider visiting the park on different days and at different times of the day; there may be knowledgeable and more engaged owners gathering at a different time.

CHECK IT OUT

If you are confident that your dog is a good dog park candidate, ask some trusted, knowledgeable friends and your favorite canine professionals if they agree. If so, first visit parks in your area without your dog to check out the facilities and culture. Make several trips at various times so you get a real feel for the park and its users. If you like what you see after multiple visits, then you are ready to take your dog for playtime in the park.

Remember to supervise your dog

responsibly while you are there, and always be ready to leave if you see things happening that make you or your dog uncomfortable. 🐾

Author Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, of Fairplay, Maryland, is WDJ's Training Editor. Miller is also the author of many books on positive training. Her newest is Beware of the Dog: Positive Solutions for Aggressive Behavior in Dogs. See page 24 for contact information, information on her classes for dog owners and trainers, and book purchasing details.

Suggested Dog Park Rules

The most successful dog parks have rules – and people who enforce them. Registration and numbered armbands make it easier to identify rule-breakers, which helps with enforcement. Here are some suggested rules for dog parks:

- 1** Dogs must be currently licensed and up-to-date on vaccinations and parasite control. This means dogs owners should be prepared to show current vaccination papers to authorities who request them, and dogs with obvious parasite infestations (internal and/or external) will be asked to leave the park and allowed to return only with a clean bill of health from a veterinarian.
- 2** No babies, toddlers, or small children allowed in the dog park. Communities may set different age limits, but seven is a reasonable minimum age for children. Smaller, younger children are just too vulnerable to injury even from friendly dogs who get excited.
- 3** Owners must pick up after their dogs. Always, no excuses, no exceptions. Good parks have well-maintained waste stations and keep poop-bag dispensers well-stocked.
- 4** No dogs in season. Females in heat don't belong in dog parks. Period.
- 5** No aggressive dogs. Dog parks are not the appropriate place for owner to try to modify their dogs' aggressive behavior. Dogs who have demonstrated aggression to dogs or humans should not be allowed to return to the park.
- 6** Owners must be attentive to their dogs. Much inappropriate dog park behavior could be avoided if humans were paying attention and intervened before canine behavior escalated out of control.
- 7** All gear, except for a collar with a quick-release buckle, should be removed from dogs before they enter the park. Harnesses, choke chains, pinch collars, and head halters pose special risks to the dogs wearing them and any dog who might become entangled in them while playing.





Digestibility Matters

A lab test may find that your dog's food contains all the nutrients she needs – but are they present in an adequately digestible form? And, if so, wouldn't a dog food maker want to advertise that?

To calculate digestibility, researchers analyze the nutrient content in the food that is consumed and in the feces that are excreted.

In my 2014 nutrition book *Dog Food Logic*, I emphasized (some might say harped upon) the need for pet food companies to provide digestibility information to consumers. It is not a difficult value to determine and most pet food companies already conduct feeding trials that measure this (yet keep the results to themselves). As one of the most basic measures of food quality, digestibility provides essential information that can help dog owners to select the best food for their dog.

What is digestibility and why does it matter? Digestibility reflects a food's ability to deliver essential nutrients to the dog who eats it. This ultimately affects not only defecation quantity and quality (how much your dog poops and how the poop looks and smells), and a dog's propensity for flatulence (no explanation needed), but more importantly, a dog's long-term health and wellness. The graphic on this page summarizes how digestibility is measured using feeding trials with dogs.

It's that last step, "Provide Results to Consumers," that is glaringly absent from the dog food scene. But, I harp (again).

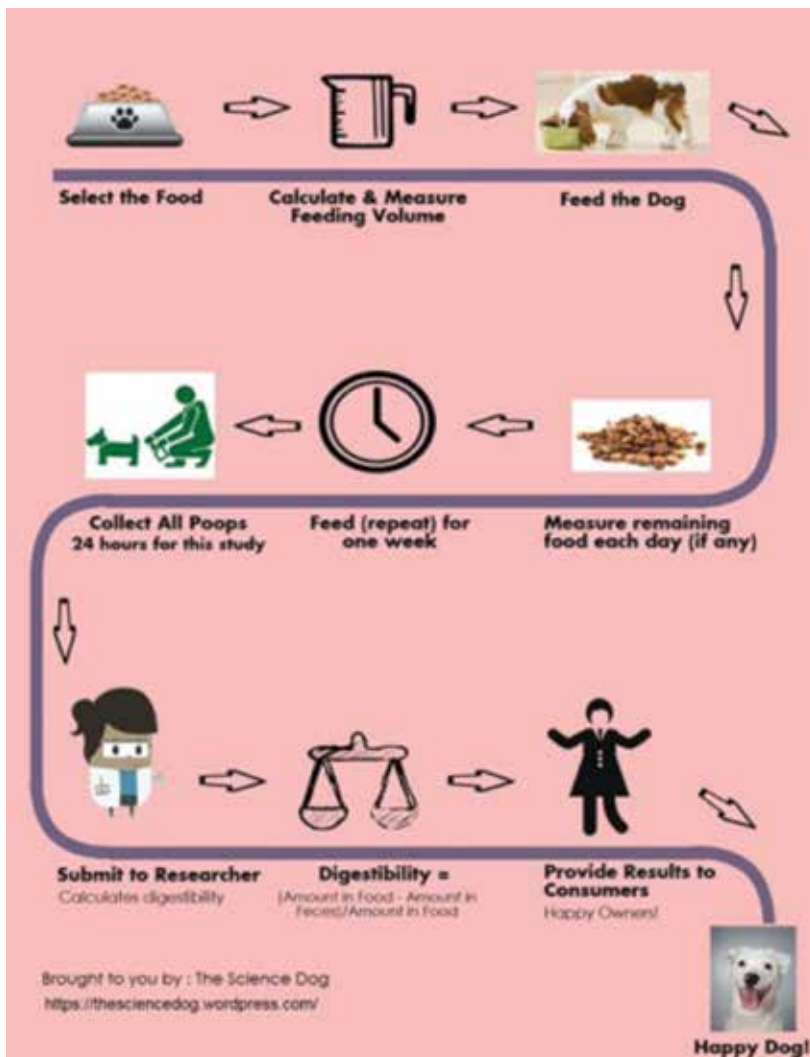
Onward. There is good news to tell.

GOOD VS. POOR DIGESTIBILITY

The term *digestibility coefficient* refers to the percentage of a food that the dog absorbs into his or her body during the process of digestion. As a rule of thumb, dry dog foods with digestibility values of 75 percent or less will be of very poor quality, those with values between 75 and 82 percent are classified as moderate in quality, and foods with digestibility values that are higher than 82 percent are of high quality. If you see products with 88 percent or more reported digestibility, you have a rock star. (For a more detailed explanation of dog food digestibility, see *Dog Food Logic*.)

The paradox lies in the fact that while many pet food companies routinely *measure* the digestibility of their products, they are not required to report this information to the people who buy their foods. Most do not provide this information even when it is directly requested. Digestibility matters (a lot), but we cannot judge foods with information that we do not have.

The good news is that two research studies measuring the digestibility of dog foods formulated with different types of protein sources were recently published by a group of animal nutritionists from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and the University of



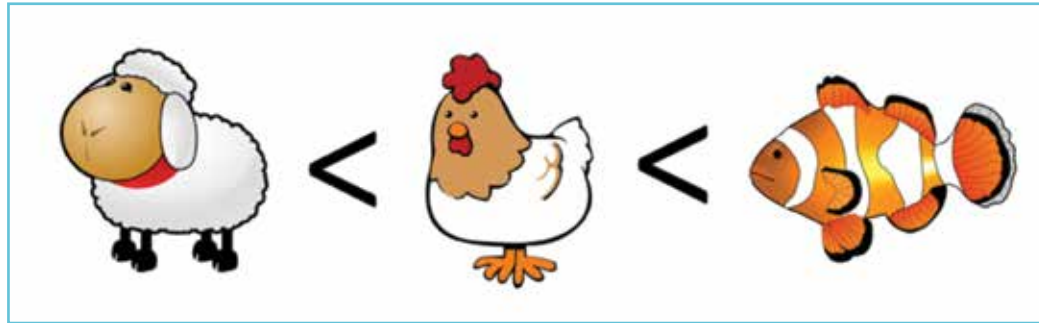
Copenhagen in Denmark^{1,2}. The first compared the digestibility of dog foods that used three common animal protein meals, and the second compared the use of fresh chicken meat (aka “chicken first”) with poultry meal as protein sources in a dry food. Because all of the protein ingredients that the researchers examined are frequently found in commercial foods, their results may be helpful to dog owners in their quest for a quality food.

Like me, you may be surprised by what they found:

■ **Lamb, fish, or poultry meal?** In the first study, the investigators compared the protein and overall digestibility of three dry (extruded) dog foods that were formulated containing equivalent amounts of either lamb meal, fish meal, or poultry meal¹. Because one of the objectives of their work was to determine if mink provide a suitable model for assessing pet food quality, they tested the foods in growing mink, adult mink, and adult dogs.

Results: As a protein source, lamb meal showed significantly lower values for multiple measures of protein quality and essential amino acid content when compared with both poultry meal and fish meal. Even though all three diets were formulated to provide complete and balanced nutrition, the lamb meal diet was found to be deficient in the essential amino acid methionine when digestibility was taken into account.

Although differences between poultry and fish meals were not as dramatic, poultry meal was of lower quality than fish meal. As a protein source in dog food, fish meal had the highest values on almost all quality measures, including digestibility and essential amino acid content. When



tested in adult dogs, the protein digestibility values of the three foods were 71.5 for lamb meal, 80.2 for poultry meal, and 87.0 for fish meal.

Overall, this study suggests that, at least for the sources used in this work, the order of protein quality was lamb meal (poor), poultry meal (moderate), and fish meal (high). Additionally, although the *reported* level of lamb meal in the diet exceeded the minimum methionine requirement for adult dogs, the *actual* amount of methionine that was available to the dogs (i.e. was digested) was less than their minimum requirement for this nutrient.

■ **Is fresh chicken better?** The team’s second study is groundbreaking. It’s the first to examine whether or not there is a demonstrated benefit to including “fresh” (frozen, actually) chicken in an extruded, dry dog food.

This is important because the promotion of “fresh first” on pet food labels is frequently used as a claim for higher protein quality in the product.

The researchers tested the digestibility and amino acid content of fresh, raw chicken (technically referred to as “raw mechanically separated chicken meat”) before processing (cooking) and then again after it was included in a dry dog food to replace about 25 percent of the product’s poultry meal. Because raw meat has been shown to be more digestible than dry rendered protein meals, it was hypothesized that including raw chicken in the dry food would indeed improve the food’s digestibility by several percentage points. (Note: Because mink had been previously shown to be a suitable model for dogs, adult mink were used to test the diets.)

Results: As expected, when tested



CITED STUDIES

1. Tjernsbekk MT, Tauson AH, Matthiesen CF, Ahlostrom O. “Protein and amino acid bioavailability of extruded dog food with protein meals of different quality using growing mink (Neovison vison) as a model.” *Journal of Animal Science* 2016; 94:3796-3804.

2. Tjernsbekk MT, Tauson AH, Kraugerus OF, Ahlstrom O. “Raw, mechanically separated chicken meat and salmon protein hydrolysate as protein sources in extruded dog food: Effect on protein and amino acid digestibility.” *Animal Physiology and Animal Nutrition* 2017; 101:323-331.2.

before processing, the digestibility of raw chicken meat was significantly higher than that of rendered poultry meal (88.2 percent vs. 80.9 percent, respectively). However, when the raw chicken meat replaced 25 percent of the poultry meal in an extruded dry food, the digestibility of the food was *not* significantly improved (81.3 vs. 80.3, respectively). In addition, the digestibility of several essential amino acids was actually higher in the food containing only poultry meal than in the food that included the raw chicken meat.

TAKE AWAY POINTS

Wow. The results of these two studies contradict several previously accepted (if never actually proven) dog food edicts. These are:

1 Lamb meal is a high-quality protein source for pet foods. Um, apparently not. The first study found that lamb meal was poorly digested (70.5 percent) and provided inadequate levels of the essential amino acid methionine after digestibility was taken into account.

2 All named species meals are superior to “generic” meals. This refers to the general rule of thumb that dog folks should always choose a food that uses a named animal protein source (such as chicken, turkey, salmon, or lamb) over a generic poultry or fish meal. Specifically, choosing lamb over a poultry or fish meal may *not* get your dog the quality protein you hoped for.

3 The appearance of a fresh animal protein source first on the pet food label means higher quality (more digestible) protein. Nope again – at least in the case of chicken. While the digestibility of fresh chicken meat was higher than that of poultry meal when tested prior to processing, incorporating fresh chicken (as 25 percent of the protein source!) into an extruded food did not improve digestibility or lead to a higher quality product. The researchers



speculated that this may have occurred because raw meat ingredients could be more susceptible to damage caused by the heating and drying processes of extrusion than are rendered protein meals.

Regardless of the cause, it appears that “Chicken First” may not be the marketing Holy Grail that pet food companies are promoting it to be.

UP ON MY SOAPBOX

This is great information for dog folks to have. Many thanks to this team of researchers, among others (all notably at universities, not from pet food companies) who have been publishing scientific evidence regarding the protein quality, amino acid content, digestibility, and safety of various dog food ingredients and products. We are grateful to them all and hope to see more of these types of studies.

These studies provide needed and essential information, but do not (yet) go so far as to provide us answers to the most important question: “What is the digestibility of the brand of food that I am feeding to my dog?”

I have said this many times before and will say it again:

If pet food manufacturers insist on telling us that their brands of food provide “complete and balanced nutrition” throughout our dogs’ lives, then providing a few very simple measures of the quality of those foods is not too much to ask!

The researchers of these papers agree. Their first paper’s abstract ends, “Furthermore, the study showed that to ensure nutritional adequacy of dog food and to be able to compare protein quality of dog foods, information of amino acid composition, and digestibility is *crucial*.” (Emphasis mine.)

So, pet food manufacturers: Are you listening? Time to step up and provide this information on your labels, websites, or at the very least, in response to direct inquiries. In the meantime, I will continue to report and promote research studies that provide us with the information that we need to choose smart for our dogs. 🐾

Linda P. Case is the owner of AutumnGold Consulting & Dog Training Center in Mahomet, Illinois. She is also the author of Dog Food Logic and writes The Science Dog blog at thesciencedog.wordpress.com. See page 24 for contact and book information.



A Step Up for Senior Dogs

If jumping down from a bed or couch is difficult and painful for your arthritic dog, the right set of pet stairs may provide just the right “crutch.”

I feel so fortunate to watch our Australian Shepherd Cody aging into a sensational senior dog. Cody developed serious health issues when he was only two years old. Because of autoimmune issues and now significant arthritis in his front elbows, at 11 years or so, he’s on a pain management regime prescribed by a veterinary specialist. Thankfully, he’s getting along quite well and most days seems to be mostly pain-free.

Recently, though, something happened that caused me to think he could benefit from the use of dog steps. Cody has always enjoyed sleeping on the bed in the guest room at night. Usually, when he first hears us stir, he hops down off the guest bed and jumps into bed

with the rest of the family (two humans, another dog, and two cats – yes, a full bed!).

A couple of months ago, his behavior pattern changed. Instead of hearing his paws hit the floor, I heard soft whining. I went to see what was up and found him reticent to jump off the bed. Anyone who has had knee pain understands that stepping down is more painful than stepping up. True for Cody, too, so what to do but pick him up and put him on the floor.

Over the next few weeks there were days when he’d jump down quickly and join us in bed, and other days when he’d whine. Thankfully, I’m still able to lift his 48-pound body, though that repetitive movement over time probably isn’t good for my own body! I decided it was time to consider a set of dog steps that could make it more comfortable for him to move off the bed. Onward with the research!

STEP-BUYING CRITERIA

I weighed the following factors when trying to select pet stairs for Cody:

- **Height:** Your criteria may be different than mine based on the size of your dog and the height of your bed. With a wide variety of dog steps available today, finding what you need is unlikely to be a problem. Based on the height of our bed, we needed steps that were in the range of 22 to 27 inches, which, for most manufactured steps, was a three- or four-step model.
- **Weight:** It was important to have a set of steps that could easily be moved for cleaning, vacuuming, and ease in making the bed.
- **Safety:** The steps needed to support a medium to large dog and have a non-slip surface that furry paws could easily negotiate. We also wanted rubber grippers or some other non-slip option on the bottom.
- **Aesthetics:** Although beauty and luxury weren’t essential for me, I did want something

Cody and our top pick in pet stairs: The Pet Studio’s RampStairs.



Photo by Borna Ash, ashfordstudio.com

that was reasonably attractive and fit with our relaxed, eclectic décor.

■ **Ease of Assembly:** I have to admit, I didn't even think about putting the steps together, so assembly didn't cross my mind. If that matters to you, I've included assembly information for each set of steps.

■ **Cost:** This wasn't really a factor as I wanted the best product available and was willing to pay for it. Spare nothing for the dog! In my experience, bargain prices tend to mean low-quality manufacturing.

OUR FOUR-PAW FAVORITES


The two sets of steps that rose to the top did so because all four test subjects (Cody and Willow, our two Australian Shepherds; Trixie, a Jack Russell Terrier; and Zak, a Beagle mix) were able to easily negotiate the steps. They were also light enough to easily move and were aesthetically pleasing.


Top Pick: PetStudio RampStairs

This was my favorite and also gets four paws up from Cody. The RampStairs (available in two and three steps) came fully assembled, so all I needed to do was pop them out of the box, raise the


WDJ's Product Ratings

The product has no redeeming value that we can appreciate.






 *We are including the product only because of its potential for improvement.*

 *The product has some value, as well as some serious flaws. Some of its features may be useful in certain applications.*

 *A good product, with one or two significant flaws.*

 *As good as it gets. We strongly endorse the product.*

PET STAIRS, COMPARED

WDJ Rating	Product Name Maker, Contact Info	Price	Sizes	Weight/ Weight Limit	Comments
	PET STUDIO RAMPSTEPS Available online from Overstock.com, Amazon.com, Chewy.com, Wayfair.com, and more	\$190 to \$207 (best price for us was from Amazon)	Two steps – 26" L x 17 1/2" W x 13" H Three steps – 40" L x 17 1/2" W x 19 1/2" H	Weights: 12 lbs Weight Limit: Up to 130 lbs	Can be used as stairs or as a ramp with easy conversion from one to the other. Comes assembled, so time and frustration saving. Light enough to easily move. Folds flat for storage.
	PETSFIT WOODEN PET STAIRS Manufacturer: petsfit.us Available from: Petsfit.us (two-step only), Amazon, Petsbeddepot.com	\$90 to \$180 (best price for us was from Amazon)	Two steps – 22" L x 17" W x 14" H Three steps – 22" L x 17" W x 20" H	Weights: Two steps – 17.6 lbs Three steps – 22.6 lbs Weight Limit: Up to 150 lbs	Assembly is easier with two people. Side rails on the steps may be preferable for some dogs. Light enough to easily move.
	PREMIER PET STEPS RAISED PANEL Manufacturer: Premier Pet Steps, premierpetsteps.com Available online from amazon.com, wayfair.com and petfrenzy.com	Two steps – \$88 - \$115 Three steps – \$125 - \$167 Four steps – \$187 - \$275 (best price for us was from Wayfair)	Two steps – 15" W x 12" H x 16" L Three steps – 15 1/2" W x 16" H x 23" L 4 steps – 15 1/2" W x 23" H x 27" L	Weights: Two steps – 17 lbs Three steps – 27 lbs Four steps – 38 lbs Weight Limit: Up to 300 lbs	All three sizes have options for solid tread (wood), non-slip tread or carpet. No assembly required. Made in the U.S.
	SOLID SIDE PET STEPS FOR LARGE DOGS Manufacturer: Help Your Pets, helpyourpets.com Available from: helpyourpets.com	Three steps – \$160 Four steps – \$200	Three steps – 24" L x 17" W x 19" H Four steps – 33" L x 17" W x 25" H	Weights: Three steps – 35 lbs Four steps – 45 lbs Weight Limit: Up to 250 lbs	No assembly required. Very durable and stable, though quite heavy to move. Fully carpeted, even sides and back. Seven carpet colors available. Non-stick pads available for an additional \$15. Company offers wheels and handle if requested. Other models available for small dogs. Made in the U.S.
	PET GEAR EASY STEP III, EXTRA WIDE Manufacturer: Pet Gear, Inc., petgearinc.com Available from Amazon.com, Chewy.com, Petco, Petsmart, Kohls, Wayfair.com, WalMart, Target	\$57 to \$115 (best price for us was from Chewy)	One step – 22" W x 20" H x 10" L Two steps – 22" W x 20" H x 16" L Three steps – 25" W x 20" H x 23" L	Weights: One step – 10.5 lbs Two steps – 10 lbs Three steps – 14 lbs Weight Limit: One step – up to 175 lbs Two steps – up to 200 lbs Three steps – up to 200 lbs	Nice wide steps, but rise on the first step difficult for two test dogs. Available in three sizes with removable and washable carpet tread. Rubber grippers on bottom to help secure the steps. Snaps together easily without tools.

two front legs, and voila! They were ready to use.

The steps easily convert into a ramp, which could be preferable for some dogs. Cody preferred the steps, as he wasn't easily able to negotiate the ramp and even slipped a little when

coming down, although the Jack Russell moved up and down the ramp with ease.

I particularly liked the contemporary look of the RampStairs. The pine frame has a mahogany finish and steps are covered with a sand-colored, easy-to-clean carpet. The fact that the legs of the steps fold down and tuck under (handle and steps lock in place) make it easy to move and store them (they would easily fit under a bed).

#2 Pick: Petsfit Wooden Pet Stairs

This lightweight, contemporary looking set comes in two- and three-step

options. The Petsfit steps come in either a white or black finish. The wood is medium density fiberboard, so they're not solid pine; however, they seem quite durable.

The steps have solid sides, which means that when the dog goes up or down, he's unable to see the drop-off on each side. Some dogs likely find this



Petsfit Wooden Pet Stairs



How to Train Your Dog to Negotiate Steps

If your dog has never negotiated any kind of steps, the mere sight of the new set of steps could cause a "What the heck is this thing?" response. Place the steps against a wall in the common living area of your home – somewhere your dog already enjoys spending time with you. You can play games with your dog near the steps, have a fun training session near the steps, let your dog enjoy a stuffed Kong beside them, and even feed meals from a bowl on or near the steps. Do this for a few days until your dog is fully comfortable being near and passing the steps.

I use a clicker as a marker signal, though you can also use a short word such as "Yes!" to mark the behavior, which will then be reinforced with a piece of food.

Place the steps where your dog will need to use them. Get some pea-sized pieces of yummy food that your dog really loves, such as baked chicken or cheese. I like to use a food the dog doesn't get on a daily basis. Take a piece of food, put it at your dog's nose and lure him to (not on) the first step, mark, and reinforce. Take another piece of food and toss it slightly away from the steps (you're resetting the dog to return to the steps).

Because you're sitting or standing near the steps and you just fed him at the step, he'll likely quickly return to you.

Next, slowly use the food lure (right at your dog's nose) to lure his front paws up onto the first step. If even one of his paws touches the first step, mark and reinforce. Continue luring until you get both front paws up on the first step. Mark and reinforce.

And be sure to praise your dog, too! I like to repeat this step several times until the dog is easily putting two paws up on that first step.

Now help your dog get his back paws up on the step. Dogs don't always easily learn to use each back foot independently, so take your time. Go as slow as necessary for your dog to feel comfortable and safe.

Once he has two front paws on the first step, take another piece of food and very slowly begin to lure your dog to the second step. As his front paws move up and onto that second step, it will likely cause him to stretch to reach for the food (keep it right at his nose). When he picks up one hind foot, mark and reinforce. When he gets the second hind foot up on the second step, mark and reinforce. Continue slowly luring him up each successive step until he reaches the bed or sofa. Hooray! You've successfully tackled the "up"!

Going down can be more challenging for dogs. Again, move at your own dog's pace. You're going to repeat the same process of luring, marking, and reinforcing your dog for successful negotiation of each step.

If he bypasses the steps by jumping down and around them, no worries. Just lure him back up the steps, then begin again to lure him down. If you move at his pace, your efforts will likely be met with success. If he bypasses the steps several times in a row, end the training session and start again several hours later or even the next day. Each dog gains confidence at a different pace and there's no need to rush the process.



Photos by Bonnie Aeb, ashfordstudio.com

comforting – like having a railing on stairs for humans.

While the product literature says these are easy to assemble, having a second person on hand to help out was handy: one person to hold the parts together while the other turns the screws. All four of the dogs were able to easily negotiate this set of steps.

#3 Pick: Premier Pet Steps Raised Panel Three-Step Stairs

No assembly required for this set of stable and durable steps made of Appalachian Red Oak. Since this product is solid wood, it's a bit heavier than our top two picks, though still quite easy to move around.

The company states that the finish is sealed well so that it's scratch- and water-resistant, and that seemed accurate. You have the choice of a stain-resistant carpet or non-slip marine covering, though I don't know what that material is made of. I was frustrated that there was no phone number listed on the company's website and the contact form on the site didn't work, so I couldn't confirm the material.

These also come in two- and four-step options. All in all, this is a nice set of steps with a country-style look. Of our four test subject dogs, three negotiated the steps with relative ease.

NEXT BEST: RUNNERS UP

I had minor issues with these products, but they may suit people and dogs with needs and taste different from mine just fine!

Solid Side Pet Steps for Large Dogs

The manufacturer bills these steps as heavy duty and they certainly are! So much so that they're difficult to pick up and move around. The website says, "Keep in mind, we build these steps to last a very long time, which makes them heavy, and wheels and a handle



may be required." The company does offer optional wheels and handle if requested. I was able to move them by pushing and pulling, but I needed help to move them to another room. Heavy does mean stable and durable, so if you don't need to move them often, weight shouldn't be an issue.

The material used is half-inch cabinet-grade wood, and the steps are covered with olefin carpet (seven carpet colors available), which should wear well and clean easily.

Some dogs might feel more comfortable with the solid sides. The entire set is covered in carpet (except the bottom), so there's no bare wood to get scratched, and the carpet would provide cushioning should you or your pet bump into it. Three of our four test dogs easily negotiated this set. Ignore the pet articles on the website, though, as the advice is badly outdated.

Pet Gear, Easy Step III, Extra Wide

This was the first set of steps I looked at online and thought would work well for Cody – but they were his least favorite! While they're wider than the others we tested, the rise to the first step is higher and neither Cody nor Zak (the Beagle-mix) were comfortable getting up these steps. The step

platform, slanted slightly toward the floor, was also problematic for Cody.

I did love the light weight of these steps and was easily able to pick them up with one hand. Assembly was effortless, as the plastic parts snap together easily with no tools needed. The carpet tread is attached with Velcro, so it's removable and washable, which is a nice feature. The Easy Step also comes in a one- and two-step option.

HOWEVER . . .

After all this, interestingly, my search for steps to help Cody was, as yet, unsuccessful. While the Pet Studio RampStairs were his favorite (and mine), and he could negotiate them quite well, he still avoids any step option by either jumping over or beside them. My guess is that he prefers to jump off the bed once rather than amble down three or four steps because each step down causes pain.

When I discussed this with Cody's veterinary pain specialist, Dr. Tami Shearer of Western Carolina Animal Pain Clinic in Sylva, North Carolina, she said, "In my opinion, jumping down results in repetitive or jarring injury to the forelimbs and cervical spine, so that's where I see the most need for inclines or steps, for prevention. Most available steps are so short and steep and most ramps are too narrow, too short, and too steep for most larger dogs to comfortably use them."

If you're tempted to try steps for your senior dog, I suggest borrowing a set first. However, if you have a young dog who repetitively jumps in and out of a car or SUV, or on and off of a bed, then purchasing a set of steps and training your dog to use them is likely the best way to prevent forelimb problems later in life. 🐾

*Lisa Lyle Waggoner is a CPDT-KA, a CSAT (Certified Separation Anxiety Trainer), a Pat Miller Certified Trainer Level 2, faculty for the Victoria Stilwell Academy of Dog Training and Behavior, a dog*tec Certified Professional Dog Walker, and the founder of Cold Nose College in Murphy, North Carolina. See page 24 for contact information.*



Raised Panel Three-Step Stairs



The Emotional Lives of Dogs

*An excerpt from Denise Fenzi's newest book, **Beyond the Basics: Unlock Your Dog's Behavior, explains how your dog's emotions affect his ability to learn (and your ability to teach!).***

Traditionally, dog trainers have spent little or no energy considering a dog's emotions when training or changing behavior; indeed, trainers or owners who did talk about emotions were often ridiculed and accused of anthropomorphizing (the process of projecting our emotional processes on animals with no consideration for the animal's capacity or the reality of the situation). Instead, dog trainers have focused almost exclusively on how they could change a dog's behavior through the principles of operant conditioning. Training was a quid pro quo equation based on the idea that dogs will maximize their well being. In other words, dogs will do things that benefit them and avoid things that harm them. If a dog's behavior gets him things that he likes, then he will do more of those behaviors. And if a dog's behavior causes things he doesn't like to happen, then he will do less of those behaviors.

That approach makes training sound simple and logical. If you give the dog treats for sitting nicely and push him down when he jumps up, then we should see more sitting. Approached in

this manner, it would be simple to list all the random problem behaviors encountered by dog owners and then determine appropriate rewards for good behavior and appropriate punishments for bad behavior. All of the problems will go away and there would be happiness. Right?

Well, no – for two reasons. First of all, operant conditioning assumes a rational participant, and when emotions come into play, reason often goes out the window.

And second, strong emotions often cause specific behaviors to happen, not by choice, but as a side effect of the emotion itself. For example, the emotion of fear often makes dogs pace back and forth, or bark, or pant and whine excessively, or jump up on their owners, clinging to them and looking for security. Because pushing them off can exacerbate their feelings of fear and clinginess, this “solution” for jumping can actually make the jumping behavior even more pronounced. Worse, it can stop the jumping, only for it to change to another problematic behavior like submissively urinating. Recognizing that the emotion of fear is driving the behavior of jumping up should dramatically change how we handle the problem behavior.

Editor's Note

Denise Fenzi is the founder and head trainer at the Fenzi Dog Sports Academy, an online school dedicated to providing high-quality instruction for competitive dog sports. Denise has competed in a wide range of dog sports, titling dogs in obedience (AKC and UKC), tracking (AKC and schutzhund), schutzhund (USA), mondioring (MRSA), herding (AKC), conformation (AKC), and agility (AKC). Although Denise has found success as a competitor, her passion lies in training dogs – and teaching people how to train their dogs. To that end, she's written a number of books on dog training, including a series on dog sports skills (co-authored by Deborah Jones, PhD).

The book we have excerpted here is Fenzi's newest title aimed exclusively at pet dog owners and pet dog trainers. We are grateful for the opportunity to share its first chapter here. If you are interested in purchasing this or any other of Fenzi's books, see "Resources," page 24. – Nancy Kerns

HOW EMOTIONS IMPACT BEHAVIOR

When emotions are driving behavior, the dog cannot simply choose to stop doing the behavior without ramifications. The reality is that animals (including people) are quite often *not* rational participants. If that sounds counterintuitive to you and you believe that behavior is largely chosen rather than the result of emotional experiences, perhaps a few examples will help you understand.

The police call and tell you that your son has been in a serious automobile accident and is in the hospital. At that moment, are you in a position to learn new things? Could you choose the behavior of sitting quietly at the table, reading a newspaper while you



If your dog was attacked by another dog in a training class, he may remain too frightened to learn anything further in that session – and tense and apprehensive in later classes, too.

wait for more information? Would you be able to play a game of chess with your spouse? Of course not! Your fear for your son dominates all rational behavior and overwhelms your capacity for conscious thought.

Instead, it's likely that you will pace, or not move at all because you're frozen in fear. You will not be able to listen to conversations that are not about your son because your emotions will not allow it. You may cry (not by choice but as a human expression of fear), you may scream, or you may appear catatonic. But you cannot choose not to be afraid because you do not choose your emotions; you simply experience them, even when you would rather not.

Let's consider a few more emotions.

You discover that your spouse has been having an affair and you're angry beyond reason. Although you had planned to spend the evening catching up on some work that you brought home from the office, there is no chance for that now. Every time you pick up the folders, your mind immediately goes back to the reality of your private life and you drop the papers to return to angry pacing, your fists balled up and your breathing heavy and erratic.

You cannot work. You cannot learn. You can barely think, let alone make any decisions or concentrate. You know that if you see your spouse at that moment, you will react badly out of pure rage. You leave the house so you will not be home when he gets there, allowing you to avoid the situation rather than having to show self control that you don't think you can muster.

Over time, as you come to accept your spouse's infidelity, you find that your anger is being replaced by a deep sadness that you cannot shake. And yet you find yourself unable to concen-



trate, to work, or even to do the most basic of life functions like eating and sleeping. You are becoming depressed and once again your emotions are controlling your behavior, very much against your will. You want your rational life back but you can't seem to get there.

EVEN HAPPY EMOTIONS CAN INTERFERE WITH LEARNING

The above examples focus on unhappy emotions like fear, rage, and sadness. So maybe negative emotions can severely impact learning and our choice of behaviors, but how about happy emotions? Could those possibly impact our outward expression of our behavior? Yes, they can.

Let's say you just won the lottery – 10 million dollars! You are excited! Beside yourself with joy! You cannot wait to tell all your friends! But first, you'll need to complete some paperwork and answer some questions. What is your social security number? How much did you claim on last year's tax return? Do you want to take the money as a lump sum or over twenty years? You find yourself struggling to

participate in this very important interview. Heck, you can barely remember your own name, let alone your social security number or the definition of an annuity.

Fortunately, the lottery secretary has seen this before, so she gives you lots of time to calm down; indeed, she suggests that you go get a friend to help you because she's pretty sure you'll get almost everything wrong if you try to do the interview alone. So while your friend writes down a list of required documents and decisions to be made, you run around the house, occasionally letting out screams of excitement and leaping around, looking a lot like a three-year-old on Christmas morning. You may be experiencing a wonderful emotion for a wonderful reason, but you're not functioning well because strong emotions block rational thought.

CANINE EXAMPLES

Now let's consider our dogs.

A large and aggressive dog lunges towards your dog at dog training school. Your dog is not physically injured, but he is absolutely terrified by the encounter. He can't stop looking

where the dog had been standing. Even though he had been doing fine in his training up until this point, now he simply stands catatonic in the middle of the room.

He is not in a position to learn because he does not feel safe. More so, he cannot simply choose to feel better any more than you can, even when he realizes that the other dog is no longer present. From the handler's point of view, the threat is gone, so the handler may well expect the dog to get on with his training. But in the same way that a human who is almost attacked on the street cannot simply move on after the police come and arrest the person, your dog cannot simply move on either. His emotions must be processed before rational thought can take over again. How long that takes is a function of the animal experiencing them, not the desires of the owner.

How about a happy emotion like joy? Does that emotion also block rational thought when our dogs experience it? Yes.

Your dog was just reunited with you after two weeks in a boarding kennel. He is overjoyed to see you again and can't stop jumping up on you with happiness! In fact, he is so excited that he can't see how irritated you are becoming about his muddy pawprints on your clothes. Now you're *both* under the influence of emotions: your dog is happy to be reunited with you, and you're frustrated because your clothes are getting dirty. At that moment, it's likely that neither one of you is going to make very good decisions.

WHEN EMOTION CAN DRIVE LEARNING

Emotions don't *always* prevent a dog from learning. Sometimes, your dog's emotions may actually set him up for

It's super stressful for most dogs to walk by this yard where the small dogs always run to the fence and bark (and redirect their frustration at each other with snarling and aggression). It's also super easy to adjust your route so you don't put your dog through that experience unnecessarily!

a great learning situation. For example, let's say that your dog is left alone all day long with nothing to do. He is bored and desperately looking for something to do, so he starts to dig the dirt out of your houseplants. Later, he teaches himself how to climb up your pantry shelves to where you keep the dog biscuits.

This dog *is* in a position to learn – in fact, learning solves the feeling of boredom – but you're not there to teach him something useful. So instead, he learns about wrecking your house and stealing dog biscuits. In this case, the feeling of boredom, and your dog's desire to eliminate that feeling, leads to problematic learning.

In all of these examples, both human and canine, how the individual is feeling is the driving force behind the expressed behavior. Since we do not choose what we feel at any given time, we're stuck with our emotions, whether we like them or not! And since strong emotions cause behavior to happen – whether we like those behaviors or not – we're stuck with them, too. If you choose to ignore the emotions and focus solely on the behaviors, you're likely to get nowhere in your attempts to create change. Worse yet, you might actually exacerbate the problem.

The fearful dog may try to run away and refuse to come back, irri-

tating the owner who knows that the aggressive dog left the dog school an hour ago. The excited, happy-to-see-you dog can't settle down! And the bored dog is wrecking your house. In all of these examples, the solution lies in addressing the emotion, not the behavior. Solve the emotion and you solve the behavior.

When an animal is in a state of emotional overload, we say that the dog is "over threshold." The dog's emotions are so great that the dog can no longer function effectively. In short, the dog cannot learn very well at that time. When a dog is over threshold, operant conditioning works very poorly because the dog is not rational at all. Only when a dog is "under threshold" is he capable of conscious thought, and only then can training take hold.

ADULTS, PRE-VERBAL CHILDREN, AND DOGS

In the above human examples of strong emotion, we discussed adults who have learned how to moderate their emotions, accept the realities of day-to-day existence, and find ways to cooperate even when they don't want to. Because of this experience, adults are not likely to be completely overwhelmed with emotion very often. So how do these examples change when we talk about a two-year-old child instead?



When your dog is happy, alert, and engaged, even a distraction as compelling as the sudden eruption of lawn sprinklers is unlikely to break her concentration and focus on you.

As every parent knows, toddlers experience (and express) their emotions intensely and frequently. Everything is new and overwhelming to the toddler, and as a result, they have neither the developmental capacity nor the motivation to modify their emotional expression. Toddlers are routinely supervised because we know that under the influence of strong emotions, they will make really bad decisions like running out into the street after a ball, lashing out and hitting people, or grabbing attractive but dangerous items. In fact, we manage their behavior by holding their hands when we are walking on a busy street, or we avoid the situation altogether until the child is older and more able to stay reliably “under threshold.”

And your dog? Well, research into the cognitive capabilities of dogs shows that dogs are roughly equivalent to a two-year-old child. You can assume that your dog’s capacity for controlling his behavior is on par with that of a toddler.

Yes, your dog can be trained to perform specific behaviors (come when called, stay, wait at the door, toilet outside). And yes, your dog can also learn not to perform other behaviors (digging in your garden, barking in his crate, pulling on leash). However, you’ll find that this training goes a lot better when the dog is not under the influence of overwhelming emotions that block effective learning. And, like with a two-year-old child, there is also a place for recognizing when your expectations are not reasonable, making management the most logical solution. This is why we leash our dogs instead of relying on training when we walk them near busy roads.

THE IDEAL EMOTIONAL STATE FOR LEARNING

Does this mean we want to work with dogs who are devoid of emotion, star-



ing vacantly into space? Absolutely not! We want to train a dog who is engaged with us! We want to train a dog who is happy, alert, focused, and motivated by whatever rewards we might have to offer. Dogs, like people, are curious and want to learn! We want a dog who is emotionally ready, willing, and able to learn!

WHEN YOU IGNORE YOUR DOG’S EMOTIONS

There are two significant effects of ignoring a dog’s emotional state. First, if the problem behavior is a direct result of the emotional state, then attempting to address the behavior directly without addressing the underlying emotion will create new problems.

For example, if your dog is afraid to go for a walk because of the dogs who lunge and bark at him from behind their fences, you could attach the leash before you leave the house so that he has no choice but to come along. Now what happens? Well, after a few days, you may find that when you call him to attach the leash, he’s nowhere to be found. Now you have two problems: a dog who is afraid to be walked, and a dog who will not come when called.

If you persist, trap him in the corner, attach the leash, and pull him out the door, then what? The next time you trap him in the corner and reach for his collar, he may well pee on your floor or snap at your hand. Now you’re up to

three problems. How many problems do you plan to create before you simply accept that your dog is fearful on his walk and address the root emotional problem?

The second significant effect of ignoring your dog’s emotional state is that you’ll find that training is slower and more laborious than it needs to be. Dogs who are comfortable, engaged, and not under the influence of significant emotions learn very quickly because they can concentrate on what you are doing together. Dogs who are fearful, overly excited, angry, or experiencing any other overwhelming emotions do not retain information well because they can’t concentrate on learning. A simple recall cue that would take a confident and engaged dog two days to learn now takes two weeks, creating a lot of frustration for both the dog and the handler, and eroding the pleasure that you both should experience during training. 🐾

Next month, we will share the second half of this chapter, which discusses the dog’s body language and how you can learn more about what emotions your dog is feeling.

Denise Fenzi is the founder of Fenzi Dog Sports Academy, an online school dedicated to the most current and progressive training methods for competitive dog sports. See page 24 for contact information.

PAW PRODUCT REVIEW PAW

GEAR of THE YEAR

Good stuff for your favorite dog and dog-loving pals!

When it comes to our own needs, we're pretty boring shoppers. But send us into a good independent pet supply store, and we might not come out for an hour – with a store employee helping us carry stuff we just *had* to try out. Hunting for unique, attractive, fun, and/or useful dog gear is so much more satisfying than shopping for anything else! We found many of the following items at pet product trade shows, and the rest in our favorite pet supply stores. We hope you enjoy them as much as our dogs have been!

BOWLS OF STEEL \$12-\$17

Providing food and water in the confined space of a kennel or crate is a challenge – especially when the only place for the bowl to be secured is on the door, where the dog is likely to knock it loose. Lixit Animal Care Products, “the largest small animal watering device manufacturer in the world” offers “Bowls of Steel” stainless steel crocks that are designed to address the issues of security and providing ample capacity in a small space.

Lixit’s patented “Quick-Lock” bowl attachment clamp and bracket allows the crock to be easily but securely mounted to any wire crate or kennel door.

Unlike most dog bowls, these are comparatively narrow and deep, which both helps reduce spilling and provides a generous capacity without taking up too much space at the front of the kennel. And just as the name suggests, these super bowls are made with high-quality stainless steel, making them easy to clean (or even sterilize) and eliminating the possibility of the chemical leaching that can occur with plastic or ceramic dishes. The crocks are available in 10-, 20-, and 40-ounce sizes, in pet supply stores and through many online retailers.

– Nina Thomas



GO TO ↓

Lixit Corp
Napa, CA
(800) 358-8254
lixit.com

ECO-OCTOPUS \$26

Everyone knows that puppies like to – have to – sink their teeth into stuffed toys that have a satisfying mouth-feel. Most store-bought toys are made with synthetic fabrics and stuffed with polyester filling. When puppies inevitably chew them up, it's important to find and pick up all the pieces of polyfill stuffing they've pulled out of the toys, so they don't end up at the veterinary ER requiring surgical de-stuffing, so to speak.

We're not going to go so far as to say that these stuffed toys, 11 inches long and hand-crafted in Nepal, won't pose a risk to a pup who chews and pulls them apart; puppies should be supervised with all toys and pieces that are chewed off should always be removed promptly. But we do believe that

the hazard posed by swallowing bits of these eco-friendly toys, made entirely of natural boiled wool (with non-toxic dyes), is less than that of swallowing polyester fibers. We've picked up a fair bit of puppy poo with bits of wool in it in recent weeks, and none of the poopers have been worse for wear.

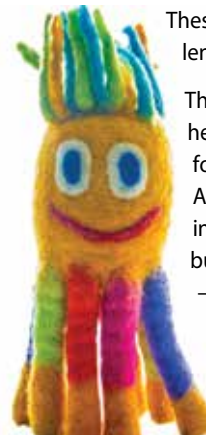
Natural wool has a subtle aroma that is bewitching to most puppies and dogs; just wave one of these toys near your pup's nose and watch his nostrils flare and his interest pique. These toys have never failed to engage even the most toy-naïve dogs we've met into playing fetch and tug games.

Le Sharma also sells one of our long-time favorites (and former Gear of the Year star), Tuggis – long ropes, about two inches thick, made of the same boiled natural wool.

These are available in a variety of lengths, from 20 to 72 inches.

The sale of these fair-trade toys also help Le Sharma's campaign of caring for street dogs in Kathmandu. Ask for them in your favorite independent pet supply store, or buy from Le Sharma online.

– Nancy Kerns



GO TO ↓

Le Sharma
Euless, TX
lesharmatrading.com

FORGIVENESS SOFA

\$200-\$400

Have we lost our minds? A \$400 dog bed? Well, maybe we *have* lost our good sense, but of all the innovative, useful products we've found in the past year, this is the one that makes us most excited.

The most special thing about this bed is what you can't see unless you unzip the luxurious cover: the base mattress. It's made of low-density polyethylene (LDPE), a tough, flexible plastic that been spun into an airy mesh resembling melted fishing line. There is no fabric in this mattress, just this flexible and springy, yet dense material, five inches thick. A 200-pound human can stand on this bed and not feel the floor; it provides firm yet yielding support.

But the best part is the fact that there is absolutely nowhere in this mattress for dust mites to live or fleas to deposit their eggs. The airy spaces inside the mesh mean it won't ever absorb odor or heat. To clean the bed, all you have to do is unzip the cover and throw it in the washing machine, and hose off the mattress; it will dry in the sun in minutes. This is a boon for anyone with an incontinent dog.

The Forgiveness Sofa is available with a variety of choices of material. We purchased the "luxury microsuede" cover and have found it to be durable and attractive to all the



Forgiveness Dog Crate Pads (shown stacked with bare mattresses) have two-inch thick mattresses inside.

dogs that come through our office. It comes off easily, washes and dries well, and even goes back on with a minimum of exertion. Replacement covers are available.

The bed comes in three sizes (30" x 20"; 40" x 30"; and 54" x 36" (shown with WDJ office-dog Otto, above).

Snoozer uses the same LDPE material in thinner (two inches) mattresses in their flat

Forgiveness Dog Crate Pads available in four sizes and dozens of fabric choices and colors (all \$63-\$165, depending on size). The material provides a decent cushion without the polyfill stuffing that seems to tempt so many dogs to chew and unstuff their beds.

But it's the five-inch-thick Forgiveness mattress that we're really crazy about. We've begged Snoozer to use this five-inch mattress in a flat bed without the bolster (which cannot be washed, somewhat defeating the purpose of this otherwise completely washable bed). Perhaps if we *all* asked nicely? – N.K.

GO TO ↓

Snoozer Pet Products
Piedmont, SC
(800) 635-9755
snoozerpets.com

GO TO ↓

SiliDog
(586) 745-4364
silidog.com



SILIDOG DOG ID TAGS \$20

What's the number one complaint about dog ID tags? The jingling! Imagine a tag that's not only silent but also easy to read, colorful, and charitable. Silidog ID tags, made of 100 percent silicone, are all that and more. The company founder and CEO was inspired to create this no-noise tag alternative when his allergic rescue dog would loudly scratch the night away. The product was featured on the entrepreneurial TV show Shark Tank and launched with Kickstarter funds.

Silidog tags come in an array of colors and shapes, so you are sure to find

the combination that fits your dog's personality. And unlike a traditional engraving on colored metal, the tags are guaranteed never to fade. They can be stretched, twisted, and bent, but snap back into their original, highly readable shape. Silidog tags are up to adventures of any size – from scaling mountain peaks to digging holes in the backyard.

The price includes engraving and shipping and an added bonus: The company gives a portion of every sale to charities that support animal initiatives. – N.T.



WIGZI GEL LEASH \$21

When it comes to leashes, we're not usually fans of synthetic materials. But we happened to fondle the handle of one of these gel leashes at a trade show – and just couldn't let go! The handle has an added layer of cushiness for an extremely comfortable grip.

The Wigzi Gel Leash is six feet long, and has an embedded reflective stripe down each side of its entire length. It features an added d-ring near the handle so you can clip on a poop-bag holder or your house keys. It's made from a synthetic material that's both flexible and strong, waterproof, and stink-proof. If it gets dirty, simply wash with soap and water and it will look like new again.

GO TO ↓
 Wigzi, LLC
 Arlington, VA
 (888) 699-4494
wigzi.com

The leash comes in four neon colors: pink, yellow, green, and blue.

Wigzi also sells matching gel collars in four sizes (extra small, small, medium, and large, \$10 - \$14). The collars are adjustable, and have a plastic quick-release buckle and a pleasingly large leash ring (which makes it easier to find the ring and snap a leash onto it). These products come with a two-year warranty.

Given the softness of the material, we wouldn't recommend these products for dogs who are prone to chewing their leashes.

Wigzi Gel Leashes are available in select pet supply stores (see website for retail locations) and online, including through Amazon.com. – N.T.

THE GREAT BOWL \$25

"Stay. Good bowl." That's the unofficial motto of Ono, a company devoted to bowls that stay put. The secret is a place mat with an integrated bowl; it's a single, molded piece of silicone that suction to any smooth surface, holding dog bowls securely in place.

Dogs absolutely can't tip, lift, nudge, or paw the bowl out of place, spilling their food or water and scratching the floor, but their humans can easily lift any corner of the mat (breaking the suction) to refill or wash the bowl. The mat can be used with or without the accompanying stainless steel bowl that nests neatly in the silicone base.

Silicone is free of phthalates, BPS, BPS, and PVC. It's dishwasher-safe and built to last; it doesn't fade or corrode; nor does it support the growth of fungus, mold, or bacteria.

The bowl is available in two sizes: the "Good Bowl" holds 16 fluid ounces, and the "Great Bowl" holds 32 ounces. Both sizes of bowls are available in single- and double-bowl mats. Single bowls are sold in either charcoal or cool gray; the double-bowls are available in those colors plus mint and coral.

Parents and grandparents of infants and toddlers should take a peek at the company's offerings for spill-proof kid bowls at ezpzfun.com. – Nancy Kerns

GO TO ↓
 Ono
 Parker, CO
onofriends.com



SIDE RELEASE DOG COLLAR TAIL WAGGING DOG LEAD

\$26-\$35

A Tail We Could Wag partners with Mayan artisans in the highlands of Guatemala to create these colorful, beautiful collars and leashes. Company owners Joe and Laurie Ryan purchase the colorful fabrics in Guatemala, helping support the small community of Mayan artisans who create the hand-woven textiles. They then assemble and finish the products in the United States “for uncompromising quality and craftsmanship, delivering durable and colorfast products.”

The bright textiles are stitched onto a strong but soft nylon material. We’ve had some of these collars for years without seeing any separation of the fabric. Only solid brass hardware is used on the collars and leashes, and the leash-rings are of an ample size.

The collars come in four sizes (small, medium, large, and extra large, fitting dogs with necks measuring from 11 to 30 inches) and 26 different patterns, all featuring bright, colorfast designs. A Tail We Could Wag also offers some lovely martingale collars.



GO TO ↓

A Tail We Could Wag
Eagle, ID
(866) 726-9247
tailwags.com

The Tail Wagging Dog Lead is six feet long, with a handle loop and a brass snap. It, too, comes in 26 different designs, so you can match or contrast the collars.

The products can be purchased directly from A Tail We Could Wag, or from a number of select pet supply stores; see the company website for a list of stores where the products are available.

A Tail We Could Wag has offered “fun fashion accessories” since 1988. The company takes its name from a poem by W. H. Auden, which contains the line, “in moments of joy, all of us wish we possessed a tail we could wag.” – N.K.

SIMPLE SOLUTION PEE PADS \$64-\$77 FOR 100

Dogs of any age might need to use so-called puppy pads to preserve their house-training and protect your floors, whether due to an immature bladder, an extraordinarily old one, or a reduced capacity for “holding it” due to medical conditions. And in this day and age, when many of us live in apartments or must be away from home for 10 hours or more, those pads had better be capable of absorbing more than just a single puddle.

Simple Solution Dog Pads has taken pee pads to the next level, offering an ultra-absorbent pad featuring a combination of high-tech solutions. By making the pads thicker (six layers thick) and utilizing their industry-leading technology that converts liquid to gel, these pads can hold up to 10 cups of liquid – that’s more than half a gallon of urine that may otherwise seep into carpets or furniture.

The Simple Solution pads contain an odor-neutralizing material and a substance that causes the pad to turn a teal color to indicate when it’s been used.



GO TO ↓

The Bramton Company
Dallas, TX
(800) 272-6336
simplesolution.com

Simple Solution offers several types of pads: a training pad (23" x 24"), an extra-large training pad (28" x 30"), and an all-day pad (23" x 24") with the 10-cup absorbing capacity. The company also sells a training-pad holder.

The products are available directly from simplesolution.com and at specialty pet retailer and independent stores. – N.T.

CLOTTIT FIRST AID KIT \$30

While many people possess first aid kits for their fellow humans, having an emergency kit for our canine companions is often overlooked, yet no less important. The Clottit First-Aid Kit was designed specifically for injuries that may occur to a dog on a walk or run, on the job, or even at home.

What makes this kit extraordinarily useful is the inclusion of Clottit non-staining blood-clotting powder. It works by accelerating the body's natural coagulation cascade by "rapidly absorbing plasma at the wound site, leaving behind platelets and blood cells, to aid in forming a solid clot . . . (which) results in complete clotting in seconds." The powdered form of Clottit is versatile; it can be used on anything from a small scratch to a large laceration. In cases of severe bleeding, it can play a significant role in saving a pet's life during the transit time to a vet.

The Clottit First Aid Kit also includes: sterile gauze pads, a stretch gauze bandage, cotton-tipped applicators, alcohol prep pads, sting relief pads, triple antibiotic gel, hydrocortisone cream, antiseptic towels, tape, scissors, a slip leash, and tweezers.

While it would be useful to store one of these kits in your car or dog-event go-bag, those of us who hike or work with search-and-rescue (SAR) dogs in rough terrain would do well to slip the bottle of Clottit



GO TO ↓
 Protege Biomedical
 Eden Prairie, MN
 (844) 795-5479
clottit.com

powder into a pocket or fanny pack. It would be a huge relief to know you had a fast, simple way to stop any bleeding caused by your dog's accidental contact with brambles, brush, or barbed wire while out on the trail.

The kit can be purchased in many pet supply stores (check the website for locations) and directly from Protege Biomedical. Refills of Clottit are also available (\$15 for one ounce, or \$30 for five ounces). – N.T.



COOLAID COOLING VESTS \$27-\$32

While there is an abundance of clothing options to keep dogs warm, there are drastically fewer options that offer cooling – and during those hot summer months, some cool relief is just what most pooches are panting for. Coolaid Dog cooling vests have your dog covered.

After years of research and development and partnership with Coolcore, Coolaid has developed a highly effective textile proven to decrease body temperature. Most competitor's materials are laden with chemicals, but Coolaid uses a unique fabric structure that increases wicking, moisture transportation, and regulated evaporation.

To begin the cooling process, simply wet the material, wring out any extra water, and put the vest on your dog. Tests show that the application of the wet vest can provide up to a 30 percent reduction in the dog's surface temperature.

These vests are all-around sleek, from their increased mobility design, to their color options, to their form-fitting, buckle-free,

strap-free profile. They are 100 percent machine washable; just pop them in the wash and line-dry.

The vests come in four sizes (small, medium, large, and extra large; see the size chart on the company website) and four colors (crockery, navy, pink, and red). Cooling blankets (resembling horse blankets, with adjustable chest and belly straps) and bandanas made of the same material are also available.

While summer is still a few months away, these just might be the perfect holiday gift or stocking stuffer. – N.T.

GO TO ↓
 Coolaid Animal
 Cooling and Recovery
 Wickenburg, AZ
coolaid.com

YOU WANT THE BEST FOR YOUR DOG

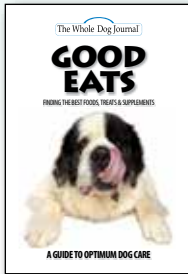
Shouldn't you have the answers before the questions arise?

Take the confusion and hesitation out of your dog's care! Be fully ready for *anything*—and *everything!*

ACCEPT THIS RISK-FREE INVITATION AND DISCOVER...

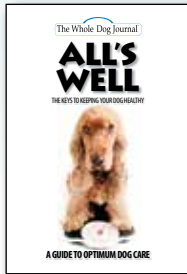
- ✓ Positive solutions to your most stubborn training challenges.
- ✓ Smart decisions for safe, natural, and nutritious feeding.
- ✓ Meaningful measures to strengthen good health and reinforce resistance to illness.
- ✓ Essential fundamentals to starting your puppy off right.
- ✓ Proven techniques to end problem behaviors.

5 great books
from
Whole Dog Journal



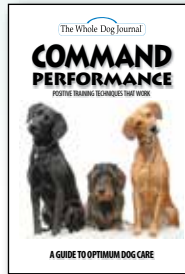
Good Eats: Finding the Best Foods, Treats and Supplements

Basic Food Selection • Canned Foods • Dry Foods • Weight Control • Treats • Food Disasters • Diet and the Older Dog • Special Needs Diets • Home-Prepared Diets • Pica and Coprophagia



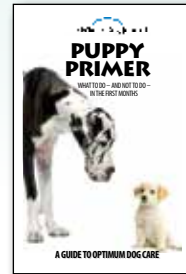
All's Well: The Keys to Keeping Your Dog Healthy

Exercise and Injury Prevention • Selecting a Holistic Vet • Old dogs • Anesthesia • Dental Health • Creating a Healthy Home • Vaccinations • NSAIDs • First Aid • Preventing Heat Stroke



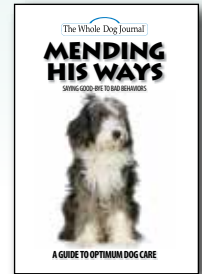
Command Performance: Positive Training Techniques that Work

Positive Training Basics • Leash Manners • Getting a Sit • Encouraging Self-Control • The "Come" Command • Greeting • Tricks and Games • Park Behavior • Teaching Wait and Stay



Puppy Primer: What To Do - And Not To Do - In The First Months

Pre-Puppy Prep • Housetraining • Crate Training • Vaccinations • Grooming • Bite Inhibition • New Dog Do's and Don'ts • Socialization • Building Good Manners



Mending His Ways: Saying Good-Bye To Bad Behaviors

Dealing with Anxious Dogs • Remedial Housetraining • Crating Problems • Destructive Chewing • Escape Artists • Reactive Behaviors • Growling • Barking • Multi-Dog Households

A WEALTH OF INFORMATION—
just \$14.95 each!

Save \$5.00 on each Guide!
Buy 4 and get the fifth
guide FREE!

Whole Dog Journal's Guides are playbooks for winning and effective dog care.
IT IS A SERIES EVERYONE WHO HAS A DOG SHOULD OWN!

Three convenient ways to order...

1. Call 1-800-829-9165
2. Online at www.wholedogjournal.com/dogcare
3. Mail this coupon

YES! Send me

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good Eats | <input type="checkbox"/> Puppy Primer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> All's Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Mending His Ways |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Command Performance | |

___ Guides @ \$14.95 = \$ ____
Add Postage & Handling \$ 2.95
TOTAL AMOUNT \$ ____

Best value All 5 Guides for the price of 4 – Just \$62.75
Includes Postage & Handling

Whole Dog Journal's GUIDES TO OPTIMUM DOG CARE

- Check enclosed (payable to WDJ) + Postage & Handling \$2.95
 Charge to: Amex VISA MC

Account No. _____ Exp Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Mail to: Whole Dog Journal Books
PO Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

30-Day Risk-Free Examination Privileges for *Whole Dog Journal* Readers when you order now, your satisfaction is assured with our 100% money-back guarantee. If you are not completely satisfied, you may return your Guides within 30 days for a full and unquestioned refund.

Your complete guide to natural dog care and training

Whole Dog Journal™

RESOURCES

BOOKS AND VIDEOS

Linda P. Case, MS, is author of *The Dog: Its Behavior, Nutrition, and Health*; *Canine and Feline Nutrition*; *Canine and Feline Behavior: A Complete Guide to Understanding Our Two Best Friends*, and *Dog Food Logic*. Her blog can be read at thesciencedog.wordpress.com. You can find all of her books at Dogwise, (800) 776-2665; dogwise.com

Denise Fenzi is the co-author (along with Deborah Jones, PhD) of *Dog Sports Skills, Book 1: Developing Relationship and Engagement*; *Book 2: Motivation*; and *Book 3: Play*, and *Beyond the Back Yard: Train Your Dog to Listen Anytime, Anywhere*. She also has a new book, *Beyond the Basics: Unlock Your Dog's Behavior*, excerpted in this issue. These books are available from thedogathlete.com and from wholedogjournal.com

WDJ Training Editor Pat Miller is author of many books on force-free, pain-free, fear-free training, including:

- *Do Over Dogs: Give Your Dog a Second Chance at a First Class Life*
- *How to Foster Dogs*
- *Play With Your Dog*
- *Positive Perspectives*
- *Beware of the Dog: Positive Solutions for Aggressive Behavior in Dogs*

All of these are available from wholedogjournal.com

TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

Linda P. Case, MS
AutumnGold Consulting and Dog Training Center, Mahomet, IL. (217) 586-4864; autumngoldconsulting.com
Linda Case is a canine nutritionist, science writer, and companion animal consultant who uses positive reinforcement and shaping techniques to modify behavior in dogs in basic level through advanced classes.

Denise Fenzi
Fenzi Dog Sports Academy
fenzidogsportsacademy.com
The Fenzi Dog Sports Academy is an online school devoted to training dog and handler teams at the highest levels of competition in a range of sports. Owner Denise Fenzi's passions are competitive obedience and no-force (motivational) dog training. Denise travels throughout North America teaching seminars on topics related to dog obedience and building drive and motivation.

Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA
Peaceable Paws Dog and Puppy Training
Fairplay, MD. (301) 582-9420; peaceablepaws.com
Group and private training, rally, behavior modification, workshops, intern and apprentice programs. Trainers can become "Pat Miller Certified Trainers" (PMCT) by successfully completing Pat's Level 1 (Basic Dog Training and Behavior), Level 2 (Behavior Modification), and any third Peaceable Paws Academy Course.



What's ahead...

- ▶ **Dry Food Review**
How to find a quality kibble, and our annual list of approved dry dog foods.
- ▶ **Hip, Hip, Okay!**
Detecting and treating hip dysplasia in puppies.
- ▶ **Shape Shifting**
What is the training method known as "shaping," and how to use it to get perfect sits (or any behavior).
- ▶ **Improve Your Dog's Biome**
A healthy gut drives a dog's wellness, but problems in her digestive tract can cause a cascade of health problems.
- ▶ **Achoo, I Love You**
Coping strategies for dog lovers who are allergic to dogs.
- ▶ **And You Thought Puppies Were Exhausting!**
What to do when adolescence descends.

YOUR RENEWAL IS JUST A CLICK AWAY!

whole-dog-journal.com

Visit our website at:
wholedogjournal.com

To order back article archives go to:
wholedogjournal.com

To change your mailing or e-mail address, renew your subscription, check payment status, or ask questions about your account, visit us at:
wholedogjournal.com or call
(800) 829-9165.

This publication is supported by sales of subscriptions and back issues.

If you would like to share material from WDJ with a group, please contact our Reprint Manager, Jennifer Jimolka, at (203) 857-3100.