

Behavior Solutions: Jumping Up

Are you your dog's unwilling dance partner every time you walk through your front door?

Maybe you don't mind the thud of paws landing on your shoulders or the sloppy kiss on your face, but your guests may not be so indulgent.

Jumping up can be annoying and even dangerous behavior. What may be a momentary irritation and an extra trip to the dry cleaner for your adult guests may turn into an injury for elderly guests and could cause a lifelong fear of dogs in children. The key to stopping your dog from jumping up is to be consistent and calm when teaching him a more polite and appropriate way to greet people.

Reasons For Jumping Up

In the wild, pups greet their pack members by jumping up and licking at their face in the hopes getting a tidbit from the hunt. Domestic dogs have retained this way of greeting each other face to face, so your dog may jump up on you to be able to greet you in the same eye-to-eye manner. He also is happy to see you and wants your attention. Some dogs jump up on people out of dominance. If your dog is displaying any aggressive behaviors, consult with a professional training and behavior specialist.

Owners sometimes reinforce this behavior by turning the jumping up into a game. While a puppy is small, jumping up may seem cute, but once he grows larger, it can lose its charm. By not letting your puppy jump on you, you can keep this behavior from becoming ingrained. If you reinforce the jumping up through any sort of attention, the behavior will continue.

Effecting a Positive Change

When a dog jumps up, some people advise pinching him between the toes or kneeling him in the chest, but these methods don't really work that well. Pushing your dog away also is ineffective because the dog sees the pushing as a form of the attention he seeks. At Starmark, we have more effective techniques for stopping puppies and dogs from jumping up.

When your puppy jumps up on you, ignore him. This means turn away from him and withhold all attention for as long as he continues his jumping. Turn away and ignore your puppy every time he jumps up on you so that he receives a clear and consistent message that this behavior will not result in any attention. Ignoring your puppy is effective because attention and praise are what he craves. Once the puppy stops jumping up on you, reward him with calm attention, praise and a food treat. You may go down on one knee to praise him for remaining calm.

If the puppy gets excited and begins jumping up again, stand up immediately and withhold all attention until he stops jumping on you. Then, repeat the exercise. Each time the puppy stops jumping, be sure to calmly praise him or offer a food reward. It is also important to praise a puppy that runs to greet you without jumping up. Keep treats conveniently located around your house to be able to reward your puppy's good behaviors quickly.

Another way to work with jumping up with a puppy or adult dog is to replace the unwanted behavior with something more appropriate, such as sitting. Teaching this exercise to your puppy from the very beginning will prevent jumping up from ever becoming a habit. Again, the goal is to teach your dog that jumping up gets nothing from you, while sitting calmly for a greeting will result in attention, praise and a food reward. With an adult dog, you may want to use a collar and leash to help guide him into a sit. Consistency is just as essential as with the puppy so that

your dog will understand what you are asking of him. This means that you must follow through each and every time your dog jumps up on you or others.

When Visitors Arrive

Teach your dog to enjoy remaining calm when guests come to the house. Keep treats near the door so that when company comes, you or your guests can reward your dog for sitting calmly to greet them. You can even have a friend help you with this exercise by having them come to the door and allow your dog to greet them. After a few minutes, have your friend sneak out the back door, and then come back to the front door for your dog to greet them. Repeating this several times, and with different people, will help your dog learn to stay calm when people come over more quickly. Using the Pro-Training Clicker is a fun and easy way to teach your dog to sit for greetings. Clicking and rewarding the instant your dog sits for a greeting will help reinforce that behavior, making him more likely to do it again. Refer to the complete Pro-Training Clicker guide on www.starmarkacademy.com for step-by-step instructions on this exercise.

You may want to teach your dog the “place” command, also known as a “boundary stay.” When a guest comes to your house, have your dog go to his place (a dog bed works well) and remain there until you release him. Only release him when he is calm. Then allow him to greet your guest. Your guest also can give your dog a treat for sitting calmly during the greeting. Please visit www.starmarkacademy.com to view streaming video lessons on these and other topics.

Giving Hugs

If you want your dog to jump up on you sometimes, but not at others, you will need to teach him a physical cue, such as patting your chest, or a verbal command by saying, “Give hugs,” for example. The Pro-Training Clicker can help in teaching your dog cues for this and other exercises. The cue will tell him when it is appropriate for him to jump up on you. You also will need to teach him another cue or command that tells him that the behavior is not wanted or should end such as saying “Off.” The key is consistency. Your dog cannot tell the difference between a tuxedo and gardening clothes, but he can understand clear and consistent verbal commands or physical cues. Never reinforce the behavior when you haven’t asked for it.

Polite Greetings

You and your guests should be able to enter your house without being jumped on by your dog. Jumping up—a dog’s instinctual way to greet people and solicit attention—may seem cute in a puppy but it can be obnoxious and even dangerous in an adult dog.

At Starmark we believe that a well-behaved and well-trained dog is a happy dog and a better companion. Each dog is unique, and so is his owner, so we use a variety of techniques, customizing your dog’s training experience to suit his personality and your individual needs. Using our training techniques, which emphasize consistency and patience, you soon will have a polite pet that sits quietly to be greeted and is a pleasure to be around for you and your guests.

Trainer Developed: Academy Tested

The certified training and behavior Specialists at Starmark Animal Behavior Center created this behavior solutions guide with you and your dog’s needs in mind. Products mentioned in this

guide are available at pet supply retailers, as well as Online at our Web site

www.aboutdogtraining.com. All products, guides and streaming video lessons are tested and approved by the certified training directors of Starmark Academy, our accredited school for professional dog trainers. It is the hands-on experience of our training division, combined with the vast technical knowledge and experience of the Starmark Academy staff that allows us to bring you useful and unique dog training and behavior solutions. We train dogs just like yours every day; we work with owners just like you every day. Thank you for choosing Starmark, the world leader in pet education.

For additional pet solutions and information about our products, please visit Starmark online at our Web sites: www.aboutdogtraining.com; www.schoolfordogtrainers.com; and www.starmarkacademy.com.

Starmark Trainer Recommended Equipment:

Pro-Training Clicker- A fast and easy way to teach your dog obedience commands. It's like saying "Well done," on time, every time your dog does something you like.

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