

How to Train Your Dog to Be Antisocial

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Training your dog to play well with others is a never-ending process. Giving your dog the skills and experience they need to get along at the dog park, the kennel or when you're just out for a walk may seem like a daunting task. Don't worry, we have good news! Training is much easier than most people think. In fact, we're always training our dogs, whether we mean to or not. The question is...what are they learning?

Here's a list of some of the most common ways pet owners train their dogs to be antisocial.



Tip #1: Timing Matters for Socializing a Puppy

Your dog is naturally inclined to socialize with people and animals. If you have a puppy, they'll go through a period of intense curiosity about interacting with others between 7 and 16 weeks of age. Ordinarily, this would be an ideal time to give them plenty of attention and practice socializing.

Of course, training a dog to be antisocial requires the opposite. If you're not paying attention to them, they may just decide that most things in the world are boring and not worth befriending. If you can steer clear of introducing your dog to friendly faces long enough, they should settle into their solitary ways, much like a grumpy human. Easy, huh? You're already well on your way to having an antisocial dog.

Tip #2: Your Emotional Cues Influence Your Dog's Behavior

Believe it or not, how you behave plays a huge role in training your dog. They are always looking to you as an example for how to react to a given situation. For instance, if you jump up when the doorbell rings, your dog will learn that huge, excited reactions are the correct response to strangers. By bringing our most frantic selves to every social situation, we can expect our dogs to happily follow suit.

If, later on, you decide that you want to help keep your dog calm, all you would have to do is set a good example for them by demonstrating calm and restraint. Breed and age still play a large role, but a calm environment can help your dog maintain a more relaxed default state.

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Tip #3: Socialization Takes Practice

Socialization is a skill. Just like sitting, speaking and rolling over, you have to practice frequently or your dog will forget how it works. So, in this case, helping your dog become their most antisocial self is just a matter of avoiding practice. If your dog’s social skills are rusty, they’re more likely to have negative interactions with other people and pets, which can have a compounding effect. It doesn’t get much simpler, does it? When was the last time you read a tip article that repeatedly recommended sitting at home and doing nothing with your dog?
If that doesn't work for you, fill your social schedule with a mix of positive pet and human interactions. Start with quick meet-and-greets and work your way up to extended play sessions. And if you find your dog takes a little longer to warm up to new friends, there’s no need to rush. They’ll come around, eventually.

Congratulations! Your pup is ready to be antisocial.

Obviously, ignoring your dog, setting a wild emotional temperature in your home and avoiding socialization is all bad advice. Socialization is a core part of training and caring for your dog. A well-socialized canine friend makes vet visits, walks and virtually every other aspect of pet ownership easier and more rewarding.

So, if you want to help your dog learn to make friends with people and pets, just do the opposite of the things we’ve listed above.

- **DO** let your dog explore friendship early and often.
- **DO** pay attention to the emotional cues you’re broadcasting.
- **DO** practice, practice, and keep on practicing.

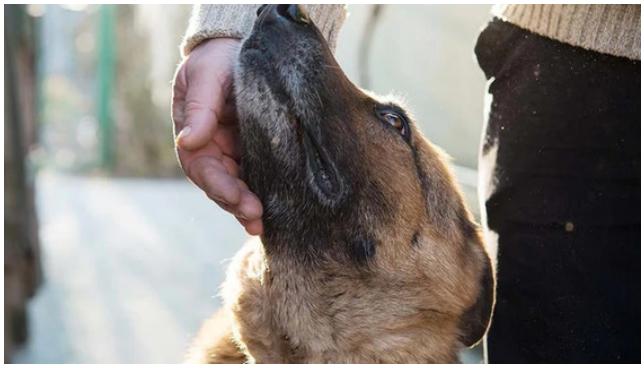
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