

The Cowichan Canine Coacher

from Cowichan Canine Behaviour & Training Ltd



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See page 4 for dog training options for BUSY PEOPLE!

✦ Highlights ✦

How to Choose a Trainer

The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) says that choosing a dog trainer can be one of the most important decisions that you make in your dog's, or puppy's, life. This is because the training techniques that a trainer uses can strongly affect how you interact with your dog for years to come, and more importantly, it can set up your dog for success or failure.

Training should be fun for both you and your dog!

AVSAB says: "Research shows that dogs do not need to be physically punished to learn how to behave, and there are significant risks associated with using punishment

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Are You Ready For This?

In addition to being joy-spreading, frolicsome, heart-stealing little creatures, puppies are also a great deal of work, and preparation is key to making your puppy's entry into your life a success all round.

Buy puppy equipment. At a minimum, you will need: Food (everyday meals, chews) and bowls. Puppy crate. X-pen or baby gate. Kong and treat ball. Flat collar, harness for walks. Long and short leashes. Canine toothbrush and toothpaste, nail clippers, dog shampoo, and brushes. A variety of toys.

Set up puppy areas. Create a confinement area (a cozy den for your puppy, despite the penitentiary connotations) for alone time and potty training. The area should be easy to clean and easy to close off with a baby gate. Think kitchen, laundry room, or bathroom. Furnish the area with a bed or crate, a water bowl, and several toys.

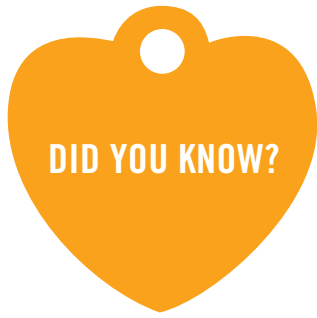
Decide on routines and responsibilities. Call a household meeting to discuss with other family members who has responsibility for what and when. Agree on set routines and procedures for consistency. For example: Who will be in charge of the puppy's house-training routine? Where will the puppy be allowed—on the bed? The couch? Who will walk the puppy? Take the puppy to classes? Practice homework?

Find good dog professionals. E.g. veterinarian, groomer, dog trainer, day care facility, dog walker, pet sitter, etc. Choose and register for puppy class or hire your private puppy trainer to make sure you get a spot with a top professional. Are you getting your puppy close to a holiday? Then plan well ahead for any sitting or boarding arrangements. The best sitters and facilities get booked up far in advance and you don't want to risk your puppy having a bad experience.



"If you can look at a dog and not feel excitement and affection, you must be a cat."

- Anonymous



That Your Dog Makes You Healthier?

Lower blood pressure. Dogs (and other pets) relax us, it's that simple. This is true even in stressful life situations like job change, illness, or divorce.

Better heart health and fitness. Through the beneficial effects of dogs' companionship and because we have to get them out for a walk several times a day, dog parents are generally healthier than dogless folks.

Fight the blues. Dogs lift the spirits of people around them, from trauma victims to autistic children and people suffering with depression.

Lower health-care costs. Why? Because of all of the above. People who have a dog (or other pet) make fewer visits to the doctor's office.



A WORLD OF DOGS

Service Dogs With Unusual Trainers

The concept of service dogs—dogs trained to help disabled people carry out tasks like answering phones, turning on lights, or crossing the street safely—has been around as we know it since World War I. And the demand for service dogs is consistently high, with waiting lists in many areas. But in the decade since the US went to war in Afghanistan and Iraq, their need for service dogs has exploded as, thanks to medical advances, more soldiers survive despite serious injuries. Add to this that it is becoming more difficult for service dog organizations to find families willing to take puppies into their home and commit to the yearlong program of training and socialization.



But one handful of service dog training programs never faced problems recruiting volunteers: Prison dog programs. Inmates, after all, have time on their hands. And training dogs has proved one of the most popular activities a prison can offer. Inspired by the idea, people across Canada and the US founded similar programs during the 2000s and today there are dozens. Puppies Behind Bars, Project Pooch, Prison Pet Partnership, Hounds of Prison Education, and so on. Most puppies are eight weeks old when they arrive at the prison and they live in crates within their trainer's cell. The pups are trained and socialized in several sessions every day, learning 80 or more commands in the year-and-a-half the program takes to complete. Qualified instructors come to the prison on a regular basis to teach the inmates how to carry out the specialized training.

Aside from the considerable benefit of providing more service dogs to disabled people, including thousands of combat vets, the program reportedly does the prisoners a world of good, too. The puppy trainers—from maximum security inmates to juvenile offenders—learn a skill and get to be responsible for an important project that will change another person's life for the better. And there's the therapeutic effect. Dogs shower people with affection regardless of any rap sheet and such judgement-free love is hard to come by behind prison walls.

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(such as inhibiting learning, increasing fear, and/or stimulating aggressive events). Therefore, trainers who routinely use choke collars, pinch collars, shock collars and/or other methods of physical punishment as a primary training method should be avoided." The AVSAB endorses training methods which allow animals to work for rewards that motivate them ("positive reinforcement training") rather than techniques that focus on using fear or pain. For more information, go to: www.avsabonline.org .



DOGS IN ACTION

Conservation Dogs

Among the many important jobs held by dogs today, conservation work is a small but crucial niche. Conservation dogs are trained to find wildlife and plant samples using modified search & rescue and narcotic techniques. The perfect dog for the job is high energy with a compulsive play drive and toy focus—the worse, the better. (Many conservation dogs are shelter rescues, given up by families who couldn't cope with an always-on dog.) This drive is necessary both for the high-level training and for working alongside biologists and wildlife researchers in the field roughly 300 days out of the year.



Conservation dog Tsavo being praised for finding rare plant

One primary job function of conservation dogs is finding wildlife scat and hair. To a biologist, such samples are treasure troves of information, revealing—through DNA analyses—a species' presence, population size, reproductive status, and food habits. Other vital priorities are searching out invasive species (e.g., yellow star thistle, a weed that overruns native plants and can kill horses), and endangered species (e.g., Kincaid's lupine, a near-extinct plant that is also the one place where the rare Fender's blue butterfly lays its eggs). For more info about conservation dogs, visit www.workingdogsforconservation.org



HEALTHY DOG

Skin Problems

Skin insulates, regulates temperature, and protects against water loss and pathogens, so skin health is important. Skin also serves as a barometer of many internal conditions, and keeping a close eye on your dog's skin condition is a must. Things to look out for include scabs, rashes, redness, swelling, dry or bald patches, sores, and hair loss. Also be aware of behaviours that betray skin problems, such as scratching, licking, or chewing. Aside from the obvious—fleas and ticks—the big culprit is allergy: Seasonal allergies to pollen, weeds, mould, etc., and food allergies, often to ingredients like wheat, corn, beef, chicken, or soy.

If you spot a skin problem, it's important not to self-diagnose. Even chronic problems like allergies need to be checked by a veterinarian to exclude more serious health issues. For good skin health, use natural soaps and shampoos, feed your dog a healthy diet free of additives, and brush her coat often.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Chihuahua

Chihuahuas, also known as Chis, probably hail from Mexico (debate rages on the topic of origin). Certainly the breed is very old—and very popular. Chis are typically bright, alert, and sensitive to cold weather, and often possess a terrier-like disregard for their own lack of size. As Dorothy Hinshaw Patent put it, "Even the tiniest Chihuahua is still a wolf at heart." The breed inspires strong loyalty in its fanciers, known to get together at events with names like Chihuahua Palooza. Due to diminutive proportions and a sky-high cuteness factor, Chis are sometimes treated as accessories instead of real dogs with real training and socialization needs. In reality, and in contrast to their high-society image, Chis thrive on size-appropriate versions of activities like agility, flyball, obedience, and tracking.

For a Chi to snuggle up with, search online for a rescue organization near you.



OUR SERVICES

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PUPPY SOCIALIZATION CLASS for puppies 8-16 weeks of age.

Life skills, Socialization, Coping with the World, Handling and Grooming, Come When Called, Sit, Down, Walk Nicely on Leash. \$10/class or FREE with Foundation Programme. Continuous enrollment. WED & SAT 10am.

FOUNDATION PROGRAMME for puppies and dogs from 17 weeks - 17 years old! Walk Nicely on Leash, Polite Greetings (no jumping up!), Settle on a bed or mat when the doorbell rings, Come When Called, "Leave it", Wait and more. Build Self Control, Focus and Willingness to Please.

\$185 for 13 weeks, or choose the MINI programme for \$120 / 8 weeks.

- PICK & CHOOSE YOUR OWN CLASS TIMES to fit in with your busy personal schedule!

- Come to class as often as you want!

- Take up to 3 'vacations' from training class and come back!

CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMME taking you and your dog to the next level! Advanced Clicker Training; Agility 101; Canine Good Neighbour; Games & Tricks; Nosework 101; Rally Obedience, and more.

REACTIVE DOG CLASS is for dogs that have trouble coping with meeting other people or dogs, or suffer from other fears that make a regular class environment difficult for them. Participation in this class must be preceded by an individual assessment.

PRIVATE SERVICES include Behaviour Consultations, Day Training (we train your dog for you) and Individual Lessons. Call or email to talk about your dog's training or behaviour issue - INQUIRIES are FREE and with no commitment on your part. Customized solutions.



How To Remove A Tick

Found a tick? Hurry slowly! As in, get it out right away, but be slow and deliberate about the actual procedure. If you accidentally leave parts of the tick behind, it can cause serious problems. Put on rubber gloves to protect yourself and have a partner hold your dog still. Then:

1. Dab the area with rubbing alcohol.
2. With a pair of tweezers, grab the tick as close to your dog's skin as possible.
3. Pull straight upward. Don't twist, jerk, or squeeze the tick.
4. Disinfect the area, wash your hands, and sterilize the tweezers.
5. Monitor the bite site for the next few weeks, especially if any parts of the tick have been left behind. If you see redness or swelling, bring your dog to the vet right away.



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First, Do No Harm



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