



TEACHING YOUR DOG TO NOT JUMP UP

Used with permission from Denver Dumb Friends League and Humane Society of the United States.

Definition:

Rather than teach the dog to “not” do something, we will ask him to do something he knows how to do that is incompatible with jumping up on you or someone else. You may use “sit” or “touch” or some other behavior as your alternate incompatible behavior. Your dog must have the alternate behavior on cue in order to do this.

Practical uses:

Use when your dog is jumping up on you or on someone else.

How to teach:

1. *Using sit as the alternate, incompatible behavior:* when your dog starts to jump up, give your cue, “sit.” Click and treat (C/T) when the dog sits. If the dog jumps up and does not sit, stand still and wait. Do not repeat the command. Wait for the dog to sit, and C/T when he does. You may want to toss the treat on the floor so the dog gets up and you have another chance to give the “sit” cue. *Practicing with other people:* Hold your dog’s leash or put him on the tether. Be sure you do not pull on or put tension on the leash. Have another person approach your dog. As the person gets within the dog’s range, say “sit.” Click and have the person treat. If the dog jumps up and does not sit, have the person stand still and wait. Do not repeat the command. Wait for the dog to sit — click and have the person give the treat.
2. *Using “touch” as the alternate, incompatible behavior:* when your dog starts to jump up, give your verbal cue and your hand signal for “touch.” C/T when the dog touches his nose to your hand. If the dog jumps up and does not “touch,” stand still and wait with your hand extended. Do not repeat the command. Wait for the dog to touch, and C/T when he does. *Practicing with other people:* hold your dog’s leash or put him on the tether. Be sure you do not pull on or put tension on the leash. Have another person approach your dog. As the person approaches, have them present their hand and say “touch.” Click and have the person treat. If the dog jumps up and does not touch, have the person stand still and wait, keeping the target hand extended. Do not repeat the command. Wait for the dog to “touch.” Click and have the person give the treat.

Moving on:

- What you are working toward is having your dog offer your chosen alternative, incompatible behavior whenever he is approached by someone, without even having to give a verbal cue. In other words, the “cue” becomes the approach of a human. This requires consistency on the part of every person approaching the dog, so you need to enlist the help of all friends, family members and guests that interact with the dog.
- Variable Schedule of Reinforcement – stick with a continuous schedule of reinforcement for the initial approach. You can have the person toss the treat and then ask for the behavior several more times, rewarding on a variable schedule of reinforcement.

Tips:

- When a dog jumps up on you, he wants your attention; remember that HE IS RECEIVING ATTENTION if you push him away, knee him in the chest, or step on his hind feet and is, therefore, being rewarded for jumping up (he is getting what he wants).
- When the dog realizes that he gets NO attention from you while he is jumping up, but does get rewarded when he stops jumping up and sits or targets, he will stop jumping up and begin to offer the alternate behavior.
- If the dog jumps up, do not turn away, just stand still and wait for the dog to offer the alternate behavior.
- Be patient and persistent; often the dog has been successful in getting attention by jumping up for quite some time, and it may take him a while to learn that this method no longer works.
- Be consistent. Every member of the household and everyone who enters the house MUST practice this technique with the dog.
- Remember that once you have taught him to come and sit quietly for attention, you must reward this behavior. Be careful not to ignore him when he comes and sits politely waiting for a reward.