

Dog Training and Behaviour

with Avril Munson



Communicating with your dog

Dogs don't speak English... Humans aren't very good at speaking 'Dog'!

A good example is that most puppies will have learnt to sit before they first arrive at training. Often this is more by luck than planning! We tend to tell our puppies to "sit"...they look at us, wondering what on earth we are trying to tell them! We keep telling them to "sit" – often saying it several times in quick succession. The pup, keen to understand us, by now is looking up at us and gravity takes over; his bottom goes to the floor. At this point, we burst into smiles and lots of 'Good Puppy'! The pup starts to put

two and two together and invariably comes up with four! Hence the pup has worked it out and is learning what we want. "Sit" is a relatively easy one – it's something that the puppy will do very naturally but the other exercises can become more complicated.

In the case of the sit the normal human behaviour of standing upright and holding food is exactly the right body language to teach the dog to sit, once people become aware that the body language is actually what is causing the puppy to sit, it becomes a simple step to teaching the puppy the command word of "sit". Body language can be used by owners, for every exercise that is required of the dog, making learning fun, efficient and enjoyable for dog and owner.



Kate and Lara, talking dog hand signal for sit

All good dog training exercises begin with body language and no 'commands', so stop talking with words and try using your body, you will start to see a difference in your dogs understanding im-

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I know that I can soon make you feel more in control and confident in your ability to train your dog, don't wait ring today!



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mediately! Fortunately for us all dogs want to please and are brilliant at guessing, so you don't have to be perfect to start communicating in this new language!

We can literally show the dog what we want, by use of our body language. Once the dog begins to respond repeatedly, we can then apply a 'command' word.

By training our dogs in this way, we are setting the dog and ourselves up to succeed!

Contrary to how it may feel sometimes, dogs do want to please us! It is when we are

not explaining ourselves clearly that communication breaks down and we get the impression that the dog is either:

- Ignoring us
- Bored
- Doing totally the opposite to spite us!
- Being naughty

The truth of the matter is that the dog simply does not understand!

Dogs learn through the following:

- Body language
- Repetition
- Reward (a worthwhile

reward! – see Tasty Titbits facts

- Combined with ongoing training under all conditions, making training as easy as possible to start with by training with a minimum of distractions (home, garden, classes) and then progressing slowly by carrying out the same training, with increasing distractions to more public places.

Next time you think that your dog is just being 'naughty', consider your own body language and what it is that you may be saying to your dog?



Doreen and Sasha demonstrating come in hand signal

Avril Munson is the Dog Calmer



A dog trainer and behaviour counsellor working with the general public, Vets, Dog Rescues (including Battersea Dogs Home and the RSPCA) and students of dog training instructing and behaviour for over 20 years.

I have successfully built my business into a leader in the Dog Training industry in the UK, with regular radio shows, TV appearance, residential courses, weekly classes, one on one sessions and training days. I have recently completed my first book on dog behaviour "Following the lead" due out late 2012.

In addition I write fact sheets, articles and courses, many of which have been published in the dog press. I designed, wrote and continue to develop an Instructor and Behaviour course for training people to become dog trainers, this course received accreditation centre approval in 2001, many students have become successful professional dog trainers since that time.

I was first asked to co-present on BBC radio Essex in 1991 on "a live phone in" on dog training and behaviour issues, advising the general public on air, I continue to appear on a regular basis, mostly with Steve Scruton on his Sound Advice programme!

The behaviour facts found here are extract from my book "Fol-



Avril and Pie

lowing the Lead" due out in the Autumn (pre-order your copy) My counselling qualifications give a depth and understanding to my work that is unique and gives an intuitive approach to my work, reinforced by many years experience of life and dogs.

I have lived with a variety of breeds of dogs, from Dobermanns to Border Collies and many in between, have bred, shown, taken part in working trials and agility, finally specialising in competitive obedience, competing at the highest standard.

Today, though I am not competing, I still love to train my own dog to forge the strong bond and communication that can only develop through advanced training, and a relationship I would not be without in my personal life! It is this dog human relationship that I want to introduce my clients to!

I began my career in training horses, the dog that got me interested and triggered my passion for understanding dogs was a Dobermann cross called Rubber, I homed Rubber from an RSPCA kennel in 1979 at eight months of age,

she had every behaviour issue possible in one dog, I have experienced first hand the impact that a dog like this has on our homes and families, still today Rubber continues to inspire me to empathise and relate to my clients!

Over the years I have experimented with various training methods and class formats, gained teacher training, allowing me to hone my skills and develop a system that is sound

and successful, so that today my clients and their dogs fully benefit from the outcome of my studies.

Dogs do not get trained overnight, I see myself as a support system for my clients to guide them through the developmental stages of their dogs life.

Many clients are now returning to me with their fourth and fifth dogs.

Testimonials

I had to take my whole approach back to basics, right from how I produced the lead, walked with her, played with her and even how I looked at her. Very subtle changes to these sorts of things produced results inside half an hour"

Anne from Saffron Walden

"I have only had one training session with Avril and already its helping to curb my little rescue dog from Shadow Chasing/Star-ing"

Teresa from Ongar

"Nearly 20 years later and now with my fourth Standard Poodle, I tracked Avril down because Dylan (our first boy Poodle) was a handful at home whenever we had visitors. We'd been to puppy classes and worked with another trainer on a one-to-one basis at their home and outdoors but we really needed someone to do a home visit to see the problems we were having firsthand. It was lovely to meet up with Avril again and to work with her as she has a real knack for understanding the Standard Poodle and her training tips have already begun to work wonders!"

Linda Wacey from Leighton

Betty, follow her progress and find training tips on
<http://blog.thedogcalmer.com>

toilet training



Dogs do want to be clean!

Toilet training a young puppy takes time and effort from the owner, and is not an easy task, especially when you are new to dogs and have a busy household to run. However investing this time in your young dog will pay off and a good concentrated effort over 2 weeks will get you both through the worst.

- Take the dog outside every 2 hours (this is the minimum, for really small puppies i.e. 8-12 weeks more frequently, possibly every hour)
- Stay outside with the puppy until she goes to the toilet
- Praise him as he goes to the toilet, e.g. "Good dog, good dog" in a quiet calm voice
- Use a key word to encourage the puppy to go, such as 'busy, busy' or 'be clean', overtime your puppy will learn what is expected and learn to go on command.
- Do not put newspaper down indoors – if you do the puppy will learn that you want her to go to the toilet indoors
- If you come home or enter a room, to a mess, do not scold your dog.
- Training your puppy to a crate is a great for fast tracking toilet training, by putting the puppy in the crate to sleep or when you are busy and taking straight outside to toilet



Christmas group Chips, Ozzy and Wilbur in fancy dress

when you let them out, will prevent many "accidents".

Do not tell the dog off, if you catch him in the act of going to the toilet indoors, if you do the puppy will be afraid to go to the toilet in front of you when you are outside, thereby making toilet training very difficult.

Remember:

- All dogs want to be clean
- Your dog does not go to the toilet just to upset you or to get you back! Even if it feels like that!
- Dog's do forget and will get it wrong sometimes

it is not a house training problem, it is likely to be the onset of separation anxiety, you will need help to solve this issue, but you can!

Ring me for help!

Occasionally a medical problem can be the cause, if your dog starts toileting very frequently or abnormally always consult your Vet.



You will succeed!

Problems:

Should your dog start toileting indoors only when left alone,



jumping up

Focus on what YOU want your dog to do



Top tip:

Do not allow other people to spoil your dog training efforts! Puppy's are so cute that they get a lot of attention from everyone, even complete strangers in the street or park, these same strangers won't be so keen on them in a few months when they are larger and less cute, especially if they jump all over them with muddy feet! You will have to be assertive with people to prevent them spoiling your training!



Most of the problems with jumping up start with our baby puppies; it is hard to resist the appeal of an eight week old puppy jumping towards us.

Therefore most of us, will, in no time have a much larger puppy that continues to jump up and now because of their size is much less welcome. There are many ways of dealing with this behaviour but my clients tell me the two methods they have liked the best and are therefore most successful are these:

Option one:

Teach your dog to sit instead of jumping "Sometimes it is all too easy to focus on what we don't want instead of what we do want!" Equip yourself with several titbits.

- Put a titbit between your forefinger and thumb, the food should be held tightly and not so big that it protrudes. (if your dog tries to snatch the titbit or nibble your fingers, enclose the food in a fist as described in titbit facts)
- Put your fingers, with the titbit in under your dogs nose
- When your dog sniffs the food slowly lift your hand up and slightly back over the dogs head
- The dog will sit, if not just persist until she does
- Walk out the room and walk back in, if this is a time your dog would normally jump, if not recreate a time when your dog does jump.
- As your dog goes to jump hold the titbit out at nose height or low enough for the dogs feet to remain on the ground.



Val and Casper, demonstrating using sit to prevent jumping up

- And use the hand signal as before
- Repeat this process at least 6 times
- Use this hand signal and titbit whenever you think your dog might jump up
- Body language is stronger than words so always use your hand signal, do not say "sit" unless the dog is going to sit.
- In time you will be able to use the command word but first you must establish the behaviour.

Option two:

Teach your dog to jump up, some owners, like me, want their dogs to jump up at times! (if you never want your dog to jump up please stick with option one)

By teaching your dog a clear command for jumping up we can speed up your dogs understanding of when you don't want to be jumped on!

- Put on some old clothes!
- Look at your dog

- Start talking to your dog in a happy upbeat way
- Clap your hands together or on your thighs (this will become the command to jump)
- Add the word "up" (your command word) or something appropriate to you, as the dog jumps up
- Keep doing this until your dog does jump if she hasn't already
- Praise the dog physically and verbally when she does jump up
- Repeat the above 6 times to reinforce and teach your dog

Teaching your dog not to jump in the same session

- Stand still near your dog
- Do not look at your dog
- Do not speak to your dog
- Cross your arms (closed body language)
- If the dog jumps at you turn away briskly and stride off purposefully (it helps at this stage if you can go to do something normal like put the kettle on to demonstrate to the dog that you are busy)
- Repeat as above until the dog does not jump

Ideally in this session you would now switch to asking your dog to jump again from the top and repeat the not jumping steps. If you don't have time ensure that you repeat this process daily for two weeks. Your dog will soon stop jumping unless invited! You can also repeat the above steps for when you are seated, simply do the same but sit down for jumping up and for not jumping up.

rules of the pack

Rules - the foundation for a well-behaved social dog



Dogs are pack animals, which is why they live so well with us in our family units, which to them equates to the 'pack'. The most successful packs in the wild are those where there are clear rules and boundaries; every dog knows its job and what it can and can't do. Their survival depends upon clear rules and consistency. This in itself offers the dog a sense of security.

To give a dog the best possible start within our 'pack', we too need to clearly outline and instigate rules and boundaries. Without these, our dog begins to display unwanted behaviours such as play-biting, jumping up uninvited, stealing and behaving like a 'wild child'! Often we try to fix the actual problem but the underlying causes remain the same and the behaviour never really disappears.

Here is my list of suggested rules, which would remain in place until the dog is at least 2 years old:

- Restricting the dog's area when he or she is left alone
- Not allowing the dog on furniture
- Ensuring the dog moves out of our way when required – not us stepping over the dog or around it
- No one is to play rough or 'fighting' games with the dog

This information is designed to give you the best possible start to living with and training your new puppy.

The following could also apply to an older rescue dog that you have brought into your home.

- Do not allow the dog to play fight/play bite with other dogs either living in the household or dogs they meet
- No 'tug of war' games with the dog
- No jumping up uninvited
- No feeding the dog from the table or plates
- All food and titbits should be 'worked' for, for example asking the dog to Sit for his dinner or titbit
- Not constantly responding to the dog's demands for attention – they do not require constant entertainment
- When returning to the dog, ignoring him or her for at least 5 minutes before greeting (displays leadership skills and reduces over-excitement at your return)



Sitting on the furniture is only okay when the dogs are mature (2 years old plus) and learned all the other rules of life!

reward based training

Using food makes dog training easy and fun

The DogCalmer.com methods of training a dog are always 'reward' based.

When we talk about 'reward', this comes in many different forms but essentially, it is what motivates the dog the most and will also be dependent on the age of the dog and the levels of distractions it can cope with. Let's concentrate on Puppies and Beginner dogs. Levels of distraction that a puppy or young dog can cope with will be very low.

Anything new or different like leaves in the wind, toys, other strange people, cars and in particular other dogs are going to be very exciting to a puppy or young dog, and though it may hurt you for me to tell you, you come very low down on the list of excitement at this stage!

So, you need something when training, to give you that edge and make the puppy want to be with you and want to do things for you!

The simplest and quickest way of achieving this is through tasty titbits!

When we talk about Tasty Titbits, I do mean tasty! Your puppy's normal dried food or doggy chocolate buttons that he gets every day of the week at home simply won't be appealing enough when your pup is

faced with the distractions of the big wide world.

My suggestions for Tasty Titbits are:

- Cooked cold sausage, chopped into chunks
- Cheese, again diced into chunks
- Cooked cold chicken
- Liver cake

Basically, something that the pup loves and does not get on a regular basis!

I am often faced with the argument that use of food is bribery! And yes it is, and why not, do you get paid for working?

The best reason of all for the use of food in training any animal is that it works and makes training fun for the animal; in return the people enjoy the success of achieving their goals and have a well behaved pet.

There is another reason for using food as a reward. Our timing with praise can be off time! The pup achieves what we want and we stand, pleased and amazed and often completely forget to tell the dog, at the right moment that he has done well!

The use of food means that our timing is improved – we have a treat, the dog does what we ask and we pop the treat in – even if we forget to smile and



Hold food in closed fist to prevent snatching

verbally praise our dog, it has got the message that it did well, simply by receiving that valued piece of food! Over time you will remember to praise at the same time, and your voice will become associated with the food, thereby you will become the reward.

Liver Cake Recipe

1lb Liver
1lb SR Wholemeal flour
1 egg
4/5 cloves garlic
Milk to bind (if necessary)

Liquidise liver and garlic. Add egg & flour. If still a bit stiff, add more milk. Mixture needs to be a mousse-like consistency.

Line a baking tray/dish with foil or greaseproof paper and place mixture in oven.

Bake for about 1/2 hr on Gas 4.

Leave to cool, cut into doggie bite-size chunks!

Dogs that snatch titbits

Dogs can learn to snatch when using titbits for training and it is this that often puts owners off of using titbits in training, by managing the way you feed you can cure or prevent this habit.

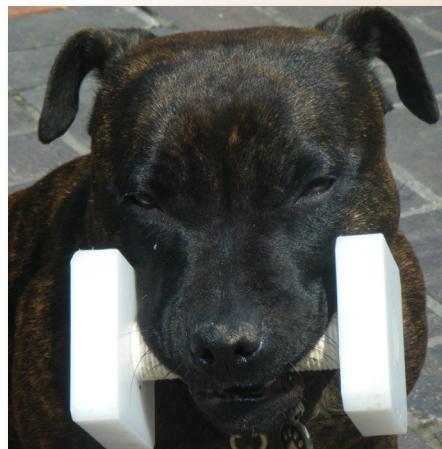
 Close the titbit in your fist and do not open the hand until the dog stops demanding the food

 Open your hand flat, as when feeding a horse

 Do not allow your dog to take the titbit from your hand until your hand is flat; this means making sure your food is enclosed in a fist.

"Following the Lead" due out in the Autumn (pre-order your copy)

I can, through years of experience, guarantee that the best-trained dogs are the ones whose owners are happy to reward them with food for everything that they do well, and who continue to use the treat-based training method throughout the dog's life.



Nessa with dumbbell



Scruffs

The training format

- One to ones
- Small group classes (maximum of 6 dogs per session)
- Specialist training events over half days or full day sessions

The one to ones for some dogs are the most efficient way into training, especially when the dog is displaying anti social behaviour, or behaviour that is less easy to address in a group or to fast track dog and handler.

Small groups allow me to give attention to every handler, yet allow the interaction essential to educating a dog to behave in the company of other dogs and people.

Specialist training events give me the opportunity to spend longer on training issues, are great for teaching an inexperienced dog how to settle in company as well as allow time to take the group for a walk and continue the training in a natural environment.

For further personal and professional development I also offer:

- Dog psychology / behaviour courses
- Workshops on specific areas of behaviour for example, dog to dog aggression, how not to get bitten and other workshops aimed at dog professionals e.g. vet nurses, dog trainers, animal rescue workers, groomers, dog walkers and dog wardens and even postmen.



Lara, Sasha and Casper having fun at class



What happens at class?



Each new course begins with introductions of the people and goal setting, both short and long term.

The goal setting allows the group to decide on their focus, creating a cohesive friendly group and supportive environment for people and dogs.

As you progress to higher classes the exercises become more varied and increasingly more challenging as we move away from body language and the dog learns vocal commands, and the distance between dog and handler increases to create obedience at a distance and off lead!

Typically in a puppy class we cover:

- Teach your dog to walk on lead
- Come to call Recall
- Sit on command
- Down on command
- Stay sit and down
- Attention getting exercises
- Handling and grooming

And the unwanted behaviours covered might include:

- Jumping up
- Play biting
- Barking
- Stealing and other unwanted attention seeking behaviours

Any unwanted behaviour that the group choose in week one would be included in the course, it can take longer to change them completely, but the owner should start to feel in control immediately.

As you and your dog advance we add more advanced exercises:

- Retrieve
- Scent
- Fun agility
- Take all exercises to an advanced stage with the dog performing off lead in the company of other dogs and distractions
- Veterinary examination
- Go to bed

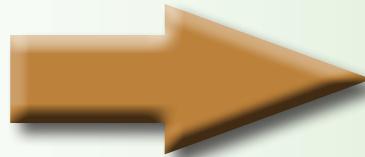
These advance exercises are introduced in simple fun way to begin with that allows us to advance your dog in a fun way to a high standard in progressive steps!

Here are some examples of some of the training and behaviour issues I have helped to change for the better:

- Pulling on the lead
- Chewing and home wrecking
- Mounting
- Biting
- Dog to dog aggression
- Dog to people aggression
- Barking
- Excitable behaviour
- Grooming advice
- Pooh eating
- Jumping up
- Toilet training
- Introducing a new baby
- Introducing a new pet
- Dog food and feeding
- All aspects of puppy care
- To sterilise or not and when
- What breed of dog would suit me?

And many more!

**Do you have
problems
with any
of these:**



Stay sit and down
Stealing
Play biting
Barking
Come to call Recall
Grooming
Walking on the lead
Jumping up

If so, you need the DOG CALMER

Contact **Avril** on **01279 871976**, for either a **1:1 session** with your dog or sign up for a **6 week course** where you will be part of a small group (**5 maximum**), and **meet weekly**.

You will be amazed at how quickly you & your dog will learn and benefit from formal training!

Not redeemable for cash.
Redemption value no to exceed £5

Puppy to advance classes
One to ones for behaviour and training
See website for full details or call!

Gift Certificate

TheDogCalmer.com

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This certificate entitles _____

to £5 discount on a dog training session!

Presented by: _____

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