

Teaching your dog to sit politely, rather than jump up on people, is an invaluable life skill and will allow you to manage your dog appropriately around other people. This is especially important around elderly people and children.

There are a number of reasons why dogs do jump. Sometimes dogs jump in an attempt to get to our faces and lick, which is an appeasement gesture. Sometimes dogs will jump on people when they are feeling anxious or worried about something. Jumping may also occur when a dog is highly aroused or seeking attention.

INSTRUCTIONS: SIT FOR ME

- Step one:** Try to be proactive rather than reactive. Place containers of dry treats around the house for when you need them. When your dog approaches you, ask them to sit before they get a chance to jump up on you. As soon as their bottom touches the ground, reward with a tasty treat.
- Step two:** Keep greetings short (three seconds). This will help to reduce arousal.

INSTRUCTIONS: SIT FOR OTHERS

- Step one:** Ask your dog to sit as the other person approaches.
- Step two:** Providing your dog remains in a sitting position while the person approaches, allow your dog to say hello by pointing towards the other person and using the verbal cue "say hi". Keep the greeting short (three seconds).
- Step three:** If your dog doesn't remain in a sitting position, ask the other person to move away and try again. You may have to break up the exercise into smaller steps by asking the person to gradually come closer each time.
- Step four:** Whenever your dog jumps up on you, simply cross your arms and turn your back. Wait until all four paws are on the ground then turn around and reward with verbal praise or a treat.

Step five: If your dog becomes highly aroused, you can redirect his or her attention and settle your dog by playing a calm game of 'go find it'.

Simply scatter a handful of tasty treats on the floor in front of your dog and ask him or her to sniff out the treats. Once your dog has calmed down, work on some foundation skills, such as sit, look, touch to help your dog settle and focus.

TIPS



Ensure that your dog knows 'sit' really well before you do this exercise. Alternatively, you can give a reward for having all four paws on the ground.

Make sure that everybody interacting with your dog follows the same routine. Inconsistency will confuse your dog and not set them up for success.

IMPORTANT



Never yell at, or push away your dog if he or she jumps and mouths.

In an anxious dog, this will increase anxiety. In a confident dog, any kind of reaction (even a negative one) may unintentionally reinforce the behaviour as you are paying attention to them.

Remember, punishing the behaviour does not give the dog information on what you would like it to do instead.

More questions? Need help?
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