

Why Positive Reinforcement Training?



Dog training has evolved from traditional dominance, punishment, and aversive methods. Now, the methodologies and techniques for dog training support positive reinforcement. Positive Reinforcement Training uses the knowledge of classical and operant conditioning. It creates positive associations and opportunities for your dog to be reinforced for desired behaviors and choices. This makes learning motivating and rewarding for both you own and dog.

Positive: Neither humans nor dogs learn in situations that are stressful, negative, aversive or punishing. Positive Reinforcement training uses rewards (pet, praise, food, toys, or anything the dog find rewarding) for desired behaviors. Basic learning theory tells us that positively reinforced behaviors are more likely to repeat themselves. Do you work for a paycheck? Consider a reward for your dog as their paycheck for the behaviors that you request and are done correctly. Positive reinforcement is a powerful communication tool for shaping or changing your dog's behavior. In addition, a powerful motivation tool which makes training fun for your dog and for you.

Proactive: Positive reinforcement training is proactive focusing on building and reinforcing behaviors. It focuses on what your dog is doing "right" It focuses on setting up the environment for the owner and the dog for success and systematically shaping that behavior and richly rewarding the behaviors we want. For example, if a puppy is jumping, the goal is to have "all four paws on the floor". When you reward that behavior, it is more likely to occur again. Dogs are efficient beings and will be glad to keep those paws on the floor when rewarded. With practice and consistency the behavior becomes reliable or a "habit" for the dog. Learning basic behaviors creates confidence and reliability in your dog and confidence for you as your dog's partner.

Purposeful Planning: Every household may have different rules or boundaries for their dogs. Positive reinforcement focuses on the behaviors you **desire** for your dog in your household and then trains toward those goals. Training happens best in short increments, reinforcing richly those behaviors that the dog is demonstrating correctly. Purposeful planning also addresses behavioral issues that do not work for you and ultimately your dog. Thus, creating a plan for success to re-teach and reinforce life skills and manners that create a circle of safety and harmony for all.

Partnership:

The human-animal bond is an amazing one. Dogs have the innate qualities of acceptance, forgiveness, and of being non-judgmental. We humans can learn from our canine friends. Positive Reinforcement Training builds skills, trust and honors that bond. Thus, creating a trusting and collaborative relationship between you and your dog.