

# morley vetcentre

## JUMPING UP ON PEOPLE

Dogs usually jump up on people to get attention and to greet in a friendly manner. Puppies are often permitted to jump up because the behavior seems cute or endearing.

Most people inadvertently teach their dogs to engage in this behavior by actually reinforcing the jumping dog, at least some of the time, with attention. This variable reinforcement keeps the behavior strong. Just looking at the dog and telling him to stop jumping can be reinforcing. Pushing the jumping dog off can be construed as attention or play. Reinforcing the dog immediately after he stops jumping can teach him the behavior chain of jump-then-sit to get the person's attention.

### TRAINING THE DOG

Be prepared—where does most jumping occur? Front door, gate, at the park etc. Strategically place containers of high value treats in locations where the 'jumping up' behaviour occurs.

Possible locations of treat containers:

- By the front door (outside door so you have treat in hand as you enter house)
- Glovebox of car (prepared with treats as you arrive home)
- Treat pouch—access to treats when out and about (park, café, friend's house etc)
- Living area of house (easily accessible area so easy to quickly grab treats and reinforce appropriate greetings)



New behaviours develop quickest with a high rate of reinforcement—so ensure you are prepared with treats in various locations and pay highly while we create the new greeting behaviour.

Teach the dog a rock-solid "sit" cue and reinforce that with petting, praise, and treats. Show the dog every day that the only way to get attention is by sitting first. This takes consistency and practice! All family members and visitors should require a sit before petting the dog. **No sit, no attention, period.**

For dogs that have a well-established jumping behavior, try the following technique:

1. When the dog begins to jump up, stand still.
2. The moment he takes his paws off, mark the behaviour 'YES' and toss the treat to get the dog away from you.
3. As he approaches to jump again, mark with a 'YES' before he gets a chance to jump and feed him a treat from your hand.
4. Take a step back and repeat this with a very high rate of reinforcement.
5. Alternate between 'YES' and toss and 'YES' and feed from your hand.
6. Encourage him to come toward you again and ask for a sit as he comes near.



## THE 'JUMP THEN SIT' BEHAVIOUR CHAIN

Many dogs learn an undesirable behavioral sequence, which goes like this:

1. The dog jumps on you jumping causes you to tell him to SIT he sits and gets reinforced with a treat and/or petting
2. To counteract this problem, try the following: :
3. As the dog approaches you (but is still a couple feet away) give the "sit" cue.
4. By giving the cue in a timely (or preemptive) fashion, you may short-circuit the jumping. :
5. If you don't get the "sit" cue out in time, or the dog jumps anyway, ignore him completely and take a few steps away.
6. Pause for a few seconds; then invite the dog to approach again and give a timely "sit" cue.
7. If/when he does the sequence correctly, without jumping, calmly reinforce him.

## TRAINING THE PEOPLE!

In order to eliminate reinforcement for the jumping behavior, you must show the dog that jumping no longer gets him any positive attention whatsoever. You must aim for 100% consistency with this! Think in terms of what you want the dog to do. The best approach is to teach a new behavior and reinforce it while allowing the jumping behavior to extinguish through lack of reinforcement.

Never pet the dog when he jumps up, even if he is the cutest little puppy! Do not allow others to pet him either, unless all four paws are securely planted on the ground. Always supervise when dogs and children are together. Kids can be very exciting to dogs with their fast movements and high-pitched voices, and most kids cannot control the dog on their own. An adult should be present to teach the dog and the kids how to behave appropriately together.

For visitors that encourage the jumping behaviour—explain that although they do not have an issue with the jumping behaviour, it is creating a problem for everyone else that interacts with the dog. Your visitor doesn't want to be responsible for the dog bowling over a toddler at the park!



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