

## Being Your Dog's Boss is Crucial to Training

Dogs, in their native state, are pack animals. We often think of them merely as independent pups and don't often mull over their unchallengeable core nature as pack animals, however. This failure to take into account the true personality of dogs can make training more complex. Similarly, understanding what it means to be a pack animal can unlock one of training's utmost secrets.

Dogs, in packs, have leaders. The leadership role in dog packs is one of immense authority. Other dogs in the pack of course subordinate themselves to leadership and will look to their leader for direction and instruction.

Of course, domesticated dogs don't travel in packs. In its place, they put together a pack based on individuals with whom they commonly interact. In essence, the owner and the owner's family members or close friends develop into the dog's pack.

This creates a superb opportunity for dog trainers. By casting yourself as the leader of your dog's pack, the dog will naturally be inclined to follow your direction, will naturally feel inclined to respect you and will show an natural need to learn from you. Since a dog's genuine social makeup will forever be seen through the natural canine point of view of packs and leaders, it simply makes sense for trainers to take advantage of this by assigning roles for both favorite and master that will make dog training principally effective.

There are a number of things a trainer can do to imitate being a pack leader. These techniques will permit your dog to discover what he will rightfully feel is his position in your family's social order and will make him substantially more amenable to your training. Some may say it is as trouble-free as 'making certain the dog knows who is the boss,' but that is an oversimplification. Being domineering is not the same as being a leader. Simply trying to enforce your will on a dog does not necessarily communicate to him that you are truly the pack leader. The gifted trainer will understand this and will take precise measures to imitate a pack leader.

Some expert-recommended techniques include:

### Consistency

Good leaders are reliable enforcers of regulations and rules. Leaders who also frequently 'look the other way' are not taken seriously. A dog will notice whether your rules and expectations are consistently maintained and may even test your mettle upon occasion, pushing the borders of established behavioral norms to determine who is actually in charge. By being a completely consistent leader, you are likely to establish yourself as being the head of your pack and your dog will then be a good deal more apt to follow your lead.

### Respect

Leaders are appreciated not just as an arbitrary result of their assigned position but because of how they behave in that position. A firm, but fair leader is far more probable to be well-liked and followed. One must be firm with their dog when training, but cannot hold unreasonable expectations or implement their regulations with aggression or penalty. A good pack leader can still use the positive-reinforcement techniques that have been proven the heart of triumphant training. Being a respectful leader will make a respectful follower in your dog. Their obedience to you ought to be premised in respect and appreciation not in terror or humiliation.

### Interaction

The successful pack leader will interrelate with his dog in conduct that strengthen the notion of the social ladder. Dogs, for example, look for cues from leadership in the eyes. By maintaining eye contact with your pet during training, he will better understand your position as leader. Likewise, it is desirable to occasionally demand your dog's concentration while walking, playing or during more intense training sessions. By commanding your dog to heel and to look at you, for example, you will further strengthen your position as pack leader.

Unlocking the influence of being a pack leader can make training much more successful. With roles obviously established, one can stay away from much of the struggle others may experience while training their pets. Additionally, by assigning yourself the function of pack leader you generate an environment in which your dog will naturally look to you for its leadership. Pack guidance is an necessary component to any fully optimized training program.

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## About the Author

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