

Why Reward Train Your Dog or Puppy?

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All puppies and dogs need some form of training. What's so good about Reward Training and why would we choose to Reward Train our dog or puppy?

Reward Training uses the principles of Operant Conditioning, specifically Positive Reinforcement. Positive Reinforcement is where we give a reward to increase or maintain behavior.

Any voluntary behavior which has been increased or maintained has, at some point, been reinforced. Without reinforcement, that voluntary behavior will eventually stop happening. That's fine if it's a behavior you don't want, but if it's a behavior you do want then Reward Training is important to reinforce any good behavior you want to see more of.

Reward Training is also fun for both dog and owner, resulting in a deeply bonded relationship based on trust and respect. If you want a dog who behaves out of fear, then Reward Training won't work very well for you. There is a difference between respect and fear.

Reward Training puts you in charge of the good things in life, and gives you opportunities to hand them out frequently. Dogs learn that they can't just take what they want; they need to work as a team with you. Owners learn pretty much the same thing, but from a position of leadership.

The most common form of Reward Training these days is known as Clicker Training. Clicker Training is a training method that uses a sound to 'mark' good behavior, then a reward is given. The sound says to the dog "Yes! What you did right then is what I want you to repeat! Here is your reward." If you are interested in Reward Training, then finding a clicker training class is probably the easiest way to learn. There are also many good books on Clicker Training and Reward Training for dogs and puppies.