8 Common Training Questions

A look into a few of the most commonly asked questions our trainers of the AKC GoodDog! Helpline receive, and their answers for how to address them.
Have you ever been frustrated that your pup won’t stop pulling their leash on walks? Are you ready to have a friend walk in the door and *not* be bombarded with jumps and leaps of joy? These along with other basic training challenges take time and patience to overcome. Taking this time is important during all stages of your dog’s life. Not only does it strengthen your bond, but it ultimately keeps them happier and more in tune with what you, as their leader, expect.

In the following e-book we have compiled a few of the most commonly asked questions our trainers of the AKC GoodDog! Helpline receive, and their answers for how to address them.
1. How do I teach my puppy to potty only outside?

Take him out at regular intervals to give him every chance to go outside – every couple of hours for very young puppies. Every time he goes potty outside, praise and treat him. To help prevent accidents indoors, put your puppy in a pen or crate when you can’t keep your eyes on him.
2. How do I get my dog to stop nipping and biting me?

Don’t respond to it. Dogs learn early on that mouthing gets their person’s attention – if that attention is removed, then mouthing and biting won’t be fun anymore. Yes, it may take a few repetitions for your puppy to figure it out, but when they do it should be permanent knowledge.
3. How do I get my dog to stop jumping up on me?

First, don’t give them attention for jumping up on you. Ignore them and walk away until they calm. Overly enthusiastic dogs may need to learn a new default behavior (‘Down’ is a great one for jumpers!) or be leashed or crated for your arrival home.
4. Why is my dog chewing everything in the house?

She’s probably either teething or bored, but either way she’s got too much freedom around the house. Gate off a small area just for her when you can’t keep an eye on her (after all – if she’s been chewing your things, you want to know what she’s up to at all times, right?) and make sure she’s got appropriate things to chew on.
5. How do I get my dog to stop barking?

That really depends on *why* he’s barking. Is he trying to get your attention? Is there something outside? Maybe he’s excited about something or feeling unsure or scared. Each situation requires a different approach. The “in the meantime” answer is to remove him from the situation.
6. How do I get my dog to stop eating everything on the ground when we’re out for a walk?

If he’s eating things out of boredom, teach him to carry a toy in his mouth (this especially helps with mouthy breeds, like retrievers and poodles). Keep him occupied and focused mostly on you during your walk so that he won’t have to find his own entertainment. Teach both “Drop it” and “Leave It” cues as well – these come in handy!
7. How do I get my dog to reliably come to me when I call her?

Say your dog’s name in a bright, happy tone. When she comes straight to you, reward with several small soft treats. Do this as often as possible. Once the dog is running consistently straight to you, you can start to add “Come!” after your dog’s name. Your dog should always have a positive experience for coming when you call. Never call your dog to you to punish him or for any negative experiences.
8. How do I get my dog to stop rushing ahead and pulling the leash?

Be as interesting as what he’s pulling towards! When his attention is on you, it’s not on that other dog down the street or the leaf blowing in the wind. During those moments when you just can’t muster the energy to be exciting and your dog pulls, STOP. Do NOT let your dog get closer to what he’s pulling towards. Instead, turn and walk the other direction. If you have a crazy puller, you may end up doing the Crazy Walk (in circles and zigzags) but that’s ok. Your dog will eventually look up at you in curiosity (or frustration!) and THEN you can praise him and continue on your way.
For answers to other questions you have as a dog owner, and to begin an individual plan for you and your dog subscribe to the AKC GoodDog! Helpline today!
Thank you for reading our e-book. We hope this information was helpful to you! Check out these products and services we think will make your dog’s tail wag.

A specialty box of quality toys, treats, and fun meant to strengthen the bond between dogs and their owners. Look inside the box!

The AKC GoodDog! Helpline offers dog owners access to a telephone service that provides live training advice from knowledgeable American Kennel Club trainers.

The Guide to Dog Care and Training DVD presents basic care, nutrition, and training tips from AKC experts.

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