# Jumping Up on People

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

Dogs often jump up on people. They stand on their rear legs with their front paws on the person. This is normal behavior for a young dog. Puppies of wild canids do it all the time. They jump up on each other or their parents. Puppies of our domestic dogs do the same. In some homes, puppies are encouraged to jump up on their owners. Obviously, this is a mistake. While it may be seen as cute or as a sign of affection while the puppy is small, it can be terrifying when done by a 100-pound Rottweiler.

Numerous owners complain about their dogs doing this. They shout "No" or "No, get down" or any of a wide range of phrases that make perfect sense to them but that are not understood by the dog. They scream and punish the animals but little seems to help. Some actions may excite the dog even more, and when this occurs, nothing is learned.

In all honesty, this behavior can be eliminated completely in a week or less, and as usual, we do not think you need to say anything. You need to communicate to the pet that this is not acceptable behavior and teach your pet what is acceptable behavior.

Avoid physical corrections

Some trainers recommend using a physical correction to prevent jumping. Physical corrections are not recommended as they may teach the dog to fear you and the dog will be confused. Punishment or physical correction may teach a dog what not to do, but will not teach the dog what to do. You must teach the dog what action is expected from him.

Too late

When a dog jumps up on you, ignore the dog's behavior. Turn and step away without speaking to the dog. Do not push him off or touch him. Do not make eye contact. As soon as the dog has all 4 feed on the ground or sits, reinforce that behavior with treats, praise, and attention. Soon the dog will understand that jumping is not acceptable (he receives no attention) and sitting is acceptable (it results in attention and treats - positive reinforcement).

Teach the right response

To prevent jumping up, it's best to teach an alternative behavior - what do you want the dog to do when greeting people? Some owners teach their dog's to sit whenever they hear the doorbell. Others teach the dog to go and get a toy instead of jumping up on visitors. Be sure to provide positive reinforcement whenever the dog does the right thing.



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