

CENTER FOR CANINE BEHAVIOR STUDIES



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The Simon Foundation - Center for Canine Behavior Studies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to the study and research of human-canine behavior in order to find solutions to behavior problems that help keep dogs in their forever homes. CCBS News Letter

Letter to Our Readers

Good news! Our Animal Owner Interaction Study (AOIS) scientific findings paper has been published in the peer-reviewed open access journal *PLOS*. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the more than 1600 people who completed the 100 questions to make this possible. As a result of your participation, the findings will be integrated into the *How I Met My Dog.com* adopter-canine matching program.

Our second study is now closed for enrollment with results about to be analyzed. Even more people –over 3500 - participated in this survey, which was designed to 1) investigate the current demographics of canine behavior problems and 2) to learn which remedial advice works best for dogs with behavioral issues. For those of you who participated, thank you for helping us to help dogs and their owners gain a better understanding of canine behavioral problems at large and to elucidate the most successful treatment options.



Naturally, since we are the Center for Canine Behavior Studies, a new study is being planned and we will let you know in the weeks to come what we will be investigating next.

At home and in-shelter environmental enrichment strategies as well as facilitated adoption and initial or secondary acquisition strategies are also on our research radar.

The results of our studies are not intended as information for information’s sake or merely for

common interest. We plan to use the data we collect to help fulfill our mission to ensure that **all dogs have a caring home for life** and are not surrendered to shelters or pounds due to preventable or remediable behavior in the first place. Addressing behavioral problems and incompatibility is one huge step toward this goal. Take a trip to any shelter to see the look of hopelessness, confusion, and anxiety in the faces of the “inmates” – some of whom are on death row – it is enough to convince any who still need convincing that our work is for a noble and humanitarian cause.

Please visit our website at CenterforCanineBehaviorStudies.Org and take some time to peruse the endeavor we are undertaking. If you have the means to donate to our cause, please do so. No donation is too small.

Let’s celebrate 2018, the Chinese Year of the Dog, by giving our all to help man’s best friend in whatever way we can.

Dr. Nicholas H Dodman
Editor in Chief
Center for Canine Behavior Studies

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CCBS Studies Update

All CCBS Friends should have received email notice that the findings from the [Animal Ownership Interaction Study \(AOIS\) were published on February 14, 2018 on PLOS ONE](#), a peer-reviewed open access on-line scientific journal published by the Public Library of Science since 2006. The journal covers primary research from any discipline within science and medicine.

The research article was published under the title *Associations between owner personality and psychological status and the prevalence of canine behavior problems*. A more dog parent friendly article describing the findings will be published in a national canine magazine.



What became meaningful for CCBS during completing the study and analyzing the data was establishing a relationship with another start-up initiative using science and technology to better match human adopters with rescue dogs. Think eHarmony for adopters and dogs. This company—[How I Met My Dog.com](#)—is now rolling out nationally with shelters. AOIS findings will be integrated into their "matching algorithm" leveraging the behavior science behind it; and hopefully contribute to making better human-canine matches that last for life.

This past fall the Center launched a second study comprised of two phases. Phase I Study entitled: *The prevalence of behavior problems in owned companion dogs* was designed to identify and quantify the different types of behavior problems that owners experience with their dogs. All CCBS members were invited by email to participate, plus other interested dog owners learned about the study by outreach through social media platforms, bloggers, journalists and, of course, the Center's own members emailing their dog-owning friends. The Phase I Study closed on January 15th and was completed by more than 3,600 dog owners; **a 100% increase in study participation**. All dogs with owner identified problems have been invited by email to participate in Phase II of the study that will look at what treatment and or training methods these owners have used on their own, or with professional guidance and which behavior programs work best.

You can learn more about what the Center hopes to learn from this study, and how findings could potentially be used to help dog owners by [visiting this page](https://www.centerforcaninebehaviorstudies.org/upcoming-studies) (https://www.centerforcaninebehaviorstudies.org/upcoming-studies) and reading about Phase II.

Thank you,
Chris Janelli
Executive Director



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IN THE NEWS:



Penn Vet Contributes to New Study Linking Owner Personality, Confrontational Training Methods to Dog's Behavior

By Sacha Adorno

Published: Mar 2, 2018

[March 2, 2018; Philadelphia, PA]—Every year, [approximately 3.3 million dogs enter U.S. shelters and adoption centers](#), and one in five of them are euthanized. Behavior problems are the most common reason people surrender a dog. New research by co-investigators Dr. James A. Serpell of Penn Vet and Dr. Nicholas Dodman of the Center for Canine Behavior Studies (CCBS) aims to help reduce behavior-related surrenders.

Published in PLOS ONE, the study—[Associations Between Owner Personality and Psychological Status and the Prevalence of Canine Behavior Problems](#)—shows an association between owners' use of aversive or coercive training techniques and dog behavior problems. Sponsored by CCBS, the survey of more than 1,560 dog owners in the U.S. and UK, is the largest of its kind to explore the influence that an owner's personality, psychology, and choice of training can have on a dog's behavior.

“Existing research shows that an owner's personality can impact a dog's behavior, but what has not been clear is how the owner contributes to these effects,” said Serpell, Marie A. Moore Professor of Ethics & Animal Welfare and Director of the Center for Interaction of Animals and Society at Penn Vet. “We designed our study to explore this question and whether the answer might be found in how people interact with their dogs, particularly through training. Although we found only weak evidence that owner personality is associated with punitive training, we did find some other surprising associations.”

An analysis of survey results saw a link between owners' use of confrontational training methods and dog behavior problems, specifically stranger and owner-directed aggression, separation issues, chasing, persistent barking, and urination and defecation when left alone. The results also showed a connection between owners' low scores on agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, and

conscientiousness—four of the 'Big Five' personality dimensions, as measured with the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)—and their dogs' tendency to display higher rates of owner-directed aggression, stranger-directed fear, and/or urination when left alone.

Additionally, the research indicated a more than five-fold increase in the use of confrontational training techniques among men with moderate depression compared with women with no depression. “There are, of course, many factors that contribute to a dog's behavior—personality of the owner accounts for between ten and fifteen percent of the total picture, a small but statistically significant effect,” CCBS co-founder Dodman said, adding that additional variables can include genetics and other environmental circumstances. “With our research, we want to mitigate any factors that might lead to a dog's surrender by making people aware of how personality tendencies can affect dogs and by encouraging owners or potential owners to be mindful of their own behaviors in regular day-to-day interactions with dogs. We also hope they will understand coercive or punitive training methods are regressive and cause more problems than they solve—it is always better to train with a carrot than with a stick.”

For the survey, Serpell, Dodman, and Dr. Dorothy C. Brown, who provided statistical support to Penn Vet through Martingale Consulting LLC, used five instruments to evaluate owner personality, psychological status, and training methods and dog behavior or temperament. To assess owners, the research team employed TIPI; Beck Depression Inventory; Emotional Regulation Questionnaire; and Attitude to Training scale. For measuring canine temperament and behavior, they used an abbreviated version of the Canine

Behavioral Assessment and Research Questionnaire (C-BARQ), which Serpell developed in 2003 and is now the world's most referenced behavioral assessment tool for dogs.

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(continued page 3)

Serpell and Dodman’s study is the first for CCBS, which holds as its mission to maintain the behavioral wellness of dogs and strengthen the human-companion animal bond to ensure that dogs remain in their owners’ home as trusted and valued companions for life. [Read the PennVet Article Here](#)

The study was funded by [The Simon Foundation, Inc.](#)

About Penn Vet: *Ranked among the top ten veterinary schools worldwide, the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine (Penn Vet) is a global leader in veterinary education, research, and clinical care. Founded in 1884, Penn Vet is the first veterinary school developed in association with a medical school. The school is a proud member of the One Health initiative, linking human, animal, and environmental health. Penn Vet serves a diverse population of animals at its two campuses, which include extensive diagnostic and research laboratories. Ryan Hospital in Philadelphia provides care for dogs, cats, and other domestic/companion animals, handling nearly 35,000 patient visits a year. New Bolton Center, Penn Vet’s large-animal hospital on nearly 700 acres in rural Kennett Square, PA, cares for horses and livestock/farm animals. The hospital handles nearly 4,900 patient visits a year, while the Field Service treats more than 38,000 patients at local farms. In addition, New Bolton Center’s campus includes a swine center, working dairy, and poultry unit that provide valuable research for the agriculture industry.*

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BOOK REVIEW



Canine Confidential: Why Dogs Do What They Do, Bekoff, Marc
Review by: Rachel Owens, Daytona State Coll. Lib., FL

Bekoff (emeritus, ecology & evolutionary biology, Univ. of Colorado Boulder) writes of canine behavior based on both research and his years of observation of dogs and their people at dog parks. His goal in explaining dog behavior is to provide people with the knowledge to allow their dogs to live their best possible lives. Dogs are as individual as humans, notes Bekoff. He emphasizes that each human should observe their own dog carefully and not rely on breed stereotypes or generalizations. He discusses dog play extensively, as it is a vital part of a dog’s social life and physical health. When dogs are at play in the dog park, he maintains, their humans should give them space. Actions that may appear to be aggressive rarely lead to actual fights but are simply a part of play behavior. Other chapters cover the myths and misunderstandings surrounding dominance in dogs and what those mean for training; scent marking; canine intelligence (there are no “smart” or “dumb” dogs); anthropomorphism and the emotions dogs feel; and a “Dog Companion’s Guide” to providing dogs with their best experiences based on their needs, not ours. **Verdict:** Paws UP! Everyone who owns a dog, breeds or trains dogs, or works with dogs should read this informative book.

Dr. Bekoff is professor emeritus of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and co-founder with Jane Goodall of Ethologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. He has won many awards for his scientific research including the

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Exemplar Award from the Animal Behavior Society and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Marc writes regularly for *Psychology Today* on animal emotions and other animal related topics, including lots on dogs. Marc is a Scientific Advisory Board Member of Center for Canine Behavior Studies



PRODUCT REVIEW THE GENTLE LEADER

One of the very favorite behavioral tools is a head halter. They are all good (much better than any alternative) but the Gentle Leader -- or a Snoot Loop for short-nosed dogs -- take the biscuit. The Gentle Leader is safe, effective, and biological in its control and the message delivered to the dog. The co-creator of the Gentle Leader, Dr. R. K. Anderson, investigated every claim that the Gentle Leader had caused injury to a dog -- flew to the location to investigate each and every report in the days when the competition was rabid -- and only confirmed one incident of injury caused by this device (*ipse dixit*) at the point when about 5 million had been sold. It's much safer than any alternative -- put it that way.

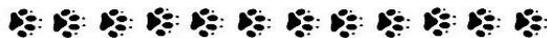
The neck strap is merely a collar but rides high on the neck where control is most exquisite. Pressure to the nape of the neck mimics what mom dogs would have done to her pups in transporting them from one place to another -- she would have grasped them by the nape of the neck causing them to relax into her charge. The nose band also sends a biologically sensitive message of control -- pressure around the muzzle -- in dog language - means "stop it!" -- as mom dog would also communicate when things went too far.

The lead, attaching 180 degrees differently from other lead/collar combos, when tensed, delivers pressure to the nape ("leader point") and around the muzzle ("maternal point") signaling relax and stop it, right now! And it works to people's incredulity when the device is demonstrated. No snapping or jerking of the lead is necessary -- only gentle (hence the name) pressure in those sensitive spots causing the dog to heed its owner's (leader's) commands.

Furthermore, the under-the-neck leash attachment means that not only is pressure delivered where it is needed, it also turns the head of a dog who would normally pull on leash and take its owner fresh air skiing! Dogs learn very quickly that when I pull I auto correct and when I hang back I am led. The result, dogs that walk calmly on leash next to their owner. It's a miracle! No, it's science.

See this link showing how to fit it and use it: the model is my dog Rusty: <http://vet.tufts.edu/farm-field/instructional-videos/>

Dr. Nicholas H Dodman
Editor in Chief
Center for Canine Behavior Studies



Ask Dr. Dodman

My 3 Shih-Tzu's are Out of control

Q: I have 3 shih tzu mixes. When they encounter other dogs they bark, carry on and start fighting with each other. I believe part of this is because I get nervous when I see other dogs approaching. I've tried the distraction (treats, going the other way) method with limited success. Do you have any other suggestions?

A: Some dogs, like yours by the sounds of it, are highly excitable. Helping them be calmer involves giving them plenty of off leash, running, exploring-type exercise. A tired dog is a good dog ... or at least a better behaved one! Not feeding a high-performance

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ration – or preferably even a calming ration (like Royal Canin’s CALM) and having them reliably respond to cues like *Quiet! Enough!* and/or *Leave it!* Of course, the latter commands must first be trained and well-rehearsed in a quiet environment (no dogs around) and then gradually introduced (on leash) in progressively busier environments. Walking around the periphery of a dog park at a distance from other dogs is a good place to start. If this technique is not meeting any improvement, after a week or so you may have to arrange better physical control. Punitive methods should not be used ... but a head halter, which works to help an owner manage may be just the very thing. To operate 3 head halters simultaneously could be a challenge, so I suggest employing such a head halter on the most fearful dog first. It is usually fearful dogs that redirect their fear and frustration as aggression onto their housemate dogs. Control the fearful one and you may find the “gang fight” never happens. Being more firmly in control of the situation will help you to relax, too. Good luck.



SCIENTIFIC TRACK

Aggression toward Familiar People, Strangers, and Conspecifics in Gonadectomized and Intact Dogs

Frontiers in Veterinary Science

Authors: Parvene Farhooody, Indika Mallawaarachchi, Patrick M. Tarwater, James A Serpell, Deborah L. Duffy and Chris Zink

February 26, 2018

Introduction:

Aggressive behavior of dogs toward humans is a major public health hazard with significant animal welfare implications (1). Dog bites account for hundreds of thousands of emergency hospital visits annually, and children are particularly at risk (1–3). Dog–dog aggression is a widespread community concern (4), and it further increases the number of dog–human bites since many human bites occur when people try to separate fighting dogs (5). Aggression is a common reason for euthanasia of adult dogs (6).

Aggressive behavior of dogs can be broadly classified as directed toward people known to the dog (familiar), toward strangers, or toward other dogs. Canine aggression is manifested in a constellation of behaviors that can range from resource guarding to threatening and to attempted or successful bites, and there are many factors that modify canine aggression, including both environmental and genetic factors (7–10). The Canine Behavioral Assessment and Research Questionnaire (C-BARQ) is a well-validated series of questions to assess behavior, including aggressive behavior directed at familiar, strangers, and other dogs (11, 12).

[Read Complete Research Article here](#)



EASY READING

Spring Cleaning - Canine Style

We are having some strange weather. Even though the calendar says, two weeks till Spring, the 18 inches of snow we had the other day doesn’t make me think that Spring is right around the corner. So, as you prepare for your “**Spring cleaning** –



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human style”, don’t forget do your “Spring cleaning - canine style”. Here’s what you need to do to get your pet’s ready for Spring.

Check to see if your dog’s identification information current? Chances are your dog will be spending more time outdoors and statistically that means there are more opportunities for you to become separated from your pet. According to a recently published New York Times article on pet safety, 80 percent of pet owners believe it’s important that their dogs and cats wear personal identification tags but approximately only 30 percent follow through. Looking to personalize your pet’s identification tag? Visit www.Dogtagart.com. You will not be disappointed.

Set up an appointment for a physical. Just as the start and end of Daylight Saving Time is my personal reminder to check the smoke alarm batteries, the first day of spring can be a good time to go over your pet’s veterinary and vaccination records. Dr. Dale Krier, owner of Creature Comforts Mobile Veterinary Clinic located in Sherman, CT, supports that being proactive is key to your pet’s overall health. One suggestion is for pet owners to use flea and tick preventative medications before the weather gets warm - instead of waiting till the season is in high gear and owners are finding parasites on their pet(s).

Visit the groomer. If it has been awhile since your pet has been to the groomer, spring is the time of year to reconnect with your pet’s grooming needs. Some dogs are high maintenance in the grooming department and some dogs are not. Regardless of individual grooming needs, it’s important that all pet owners take time to brush their pet’s coat on a regular basis. Regular brushing will help to reduce matting, keep the coat shiny and sleek and (my favorite) help to reduce the amount of “hair tumbleweeds” that are in your home and car!!

Check the local flora. From Amaryllis to Yarrow, there are many plants that will beautify your yard but can kill your pet. Take time to learn about the toxicity of plants that are native to your area as well as the plants that you use in your garden. For a comprehensive list of plants that can be considered toxic to your pet visit: [ASPCA- Toxic and Non-Toxic Plants](#). Also, make sure you have the number of a poison control hotline in a handy place, just in case it is needed.

Bottomline: Spring is not only for cleaning up our homes and yards, but can also be part of an annual ritual to include our pets. Making sure your dog’s identification is current, veterinary care is up-to-date, grooming needs are attended to, and developing an understanding of native plants that are considered toxic are several ways to make this happen.

Donna Gleason CPDT-KA, CDBC, MA
Research Associate
Center for Canine Behavior Studies



FEATURED PET

Therapy Dogs – The Other Half of the Story

When you think of therapy dogs, what do you think of? I’m sure many visions come to mind:

- A dog that can follow their handler’s cues.
- A dog that can adapt to different environments and situations with ease.
- A dog that brings a smile to everyone they meet.

All the above skills are required for a therapy dog. However, that is only half of the story. What you don’t see is the dog’s life before engaging in therapy work, the training that was necessary and how a team prepares for each facility visitation. Every team is unique and has a story. This week, I will be sharing with you one team’s “other half of the story”.



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This is a story about Lucy, my certified therapy dog. When working, she instinctively knows what is expected of her and how to interact with the people she meets. When Lucy's backpack is on, she presents herself confidently and appears to understand that it's time to go to work. Lucy is an incredible therapy dog, but her journey is even more amazing.

Many times, when adopting a rescue dog, the information about the dog's past is negligible. Lucy was no different. The only clues I had were observable: a piece of her ear was missing and a scar on her hind quarters. We do know that at approximately nine months old, Lucy (with her two sisters) arrived at a high-kill shelter in Long Island. Unfortunately, for these girls, space became limited and being the longest residents, they were scheduled to be euthanized. High-kill shelters often form affiliations with non-kill shelters. It is these affiliations that give many dogs a second chance. That is exactly what happened to the sisters and off they went to the New Fairfield/Sherman Animal Welfare Society. The good news is that all sisters were adopted. However, Lucy kept being returned – four times. When I met Lucy, I did not intend on taking home a dog that day. However, when she nuzzled her head into my chest, there became an immediate connection and thus our journey began.

Bringing home a dog can often offer challenges as canines and humans begin the process of transitioning into their new life together. Lucy "raised the bar" during our settling-in phase! She had no knowledge of any simple cues, she was "wild" on the leash, and didn't realize that toileting was an outside activity. OK, I'm a trainer...we can do this! But Lucy's biggest issue-separation anxiety would appear to make the others easy to correct. She would panic when left alone, mutilate her body, and destroy the wood work around doors. Lucy was a mess.

When working with dogs, even though all the behaviors they may be exhibiting, you can often see their true personality. Without going into all the details of how I worked with Lucy, there was one constant...Lucy loved people. She instinctively knew what to do when meeting someone for the first time or walking into a dog-friendly public store. Then the light bulb went off. Therapy work!!! That is Lucy's gift.

Fast forward to today!! Lucy is a registered/certified therapy dog under two national organizations. She visits hospitals, local libraries and park and recreation camps. Her gift has crossed the path of many people. Whether it's someone who is recovering from surgery, a child reading to her, or listening to someone speak about their special dog, Lucy will patiently wait till it's time to go. That is why she is called an "Angel on a Leash".

But her work doesn't begin the moment she walks into a facility. Her preparation begins with a total grooming the day before. You might even see me sharing an ice cream with her afterward! Right before the visit, Lucy is given the opportunity for physical exercise and mental stimulation. When she is ready, the backpack goes on and off to work we go. As you can see, walking through the door of a facility isn't the beginning, but the result of the experiences that occurred prior to the visit.

Final Note: So, the next time you see a therapy dog team visiting a facility, think of Lucy and understand there may be much more to the story than meets the eye.

Donna Gleason CPDT-KA, CDBC, MA
Research Associate
Center for Canine Behavior Studies



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DAY IN THE LIFE OF A DOG TRAINER

Teach Your Dog a Different Greeting Ritual, Hug not Jump!



We confuse our dogs all the time reinforcing good and bad behaviors without even realizing it. Our dogs are constantly observing our actions and trying to figure out predictors or cues and form patterns. Think about when your puppy first came home to live with you and jumped up on your knee or barked. What did you do? Yes, that's right you probably looked down at them...smiled that smile and then gave them a cookie. You and others did this repeatedly. Repeating your behaviors helped teach (aka reinforce) your dog to learn to jump up to communicate for your attention. Furthermore, you exuded so much oxytocin (love hormone) when you did this not only did your action of looking reinforce the behavior but the way you felt about it was also reinforcing for you both. Yes, our actions and how we feel reinforce behaviors. If puppy was of a breed that would grow larger, that cute jumping behavior would quickly change to become an annoying one.

Understanding how best to approach, identify and improve behaviors in pet companion and captive animals was solidified for me in an online course I took (a few times) with Dr. Susan Friedman, PhD professor of Psychology at Utah State University. The online course entitled, ["Living and Learning with Animals"](#) (continuing educational units, CEU's are offered for professional dog trainers) is outstanding 12 week program using the Socratic method to teach. The course literally changed my life and how I view the world. It became a turning point in my career as a dog trainer. I recommend it for anyone working or living with animals be it a pet companion guardian, trainer, behavior specialist, behaviorist, veterinarian, shelter, rescue, zoo keepers, conservation or wildlife worker. We could all use some help learning to improve our observational skills and evaluate antecedent (environmental) factors that may attribute to our pets behavior. The use of applied behavior analysis including step by step functional analysis is reviewed in a simple and elegant way.

You can start to practice how your actions and the environment in general may factor into your pet dogs behavior by considering the ABC of Behavior and antecedent management. Here the "A" stands for antecedents which are those things in the environment that happen before a behavior occurs (e.g., strange dog, the sound of a passing truck, a car ride, vet visit, food, you smiling and kneeling etc). The "B" is the behavior in question you wish to improve and the "C" for consequence of the behavior we wish to improve. Why we wish to improve the behavior. Always start with the "B", identify what Behavior you wish to improve and then consider adjusting what happens **before** the behavior to help change the consequence. By keeping this simple acronym (ABC) in mind when you observe a behavior you wish to improve will help you take the steps toward improving behaviors and lowering frustrations.

In the case of a dog jumping up, first identify what actions happen beforehand that may contribute to the behavior occurring. For example, do you approach your dog wide eyed with open arms? Do you stare and smile? Crouch down? If you don't but your husband, wife, sister, brother, dog walker, grandmother, strangers, children DO then the dog is being reinforced. If its everyone and their brother has been reinforcing the jumping up since puppyhood, it makes it very difficult to manage the change - not impossible- just may take a little longer. It's unfair to be upset at our dog since we've been encouraging the action and using it as a greeting. . Evaluating what happens before the behavior (antecedent) and making changes is the first crucial step toward long lasting changes.A few suggestions to reinforce alternative behaviors (i.e. a sit, down, wait), you could try right away include:

Option 1) The Door: we can use a door or baby gate to help teach the dog to settle. Here we rely on using the law of consequence. Simply open the door and if the dog barrels toward you, then immediately shut the door. Repeat this over until you start to see the dog settle down. Seeing you is better than apple pie and so you become the reward and opening, closing the door is the consequence of their action. The dog ends up learning they affect outcome to some degree as they make a choice based on the consequence of the door opening and closing. If you enter and they do not jump, you continue to proceed with entering.

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Option 2) Redirect and wait for all four paws on the floor before approaching: Prepare a few treats in your hand before entering a room. When your dog sees you throw them away from you in the opposite direction on the floor and say “find it”. The sound and smell of the cookies usually helps redirect the dog from jumping up on you. While your dog explores the floor for treats keeping their paws on the ground, approach your dog and praise them with another cookie and or petting while saying hello. We are changing the greeting ritual here from jumping up on us to instead, keeping all four on the floor. Only when all four paws are on the floor do we attend to the dog.

Option 3) Teaching your dog to jump up on cue (Hugs) serves to help you manage and may reduce any emotional frustration your dog feels as you change the learned human-dog greeting ritual on them. Approach your dog holding a cookie in both hands and standing in front of them begin to tap your knee/chest or shoulder area (depending on how big your dogs is) with both hands repeating a word as for example “Hugs” or “Greetings”. You may need to put the treat on their nose first so they may to smell and be motivated by what you have (olfaction is the primary way our dogs “see” the world.) You may need to repeat the same steps a few times tapping until the dog jumps up. As soon as the dog jumps up on you with their paws be quick to signal to them they’ve solved the problem “job well done!” Using the cookie initially helps us to lure the dog up. When everyone in the household is consistent, you will quickly observe the dog AND people changing behaviors! If, at any point during your practice your dog inadvertently jumps up without a cue (because they are so excited they can’t help themselves), step back and walk away saying nothing at all then try again. Be patient and remember we are improving established behaviors and actions reinforced over time for both the human and dog. Some take a little more time than others to get right.

Regardless of which option you choose - and you could use them all – observe contributing environmental factors (and we are part of the environment), be kind and please be patient. Remember dogs rely on cues and predictors in the environment. They don’t communicate with us using words but instead are constantly observing our body language and actions. The old adage that actions speak louder than words rings so true for dogs and all animals we live with.

Thank you for teaching your pet companion using modern and kind methods, they will love you forever for it!

Vivian Zottola, MS, CPDT-KA, CSAT, CBCC
Research Associate
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The Canine Center for Behavior Studies is supported 100% by donations from our friends.

Please click on the link below and consider donating so we can continue our research and striving to make the world a better place for each dog.



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