



The Misha May Foundation  
*mutts in safe homes always*  
a 501(c)(3) non-profit dog (and cat) rescue

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Learn about, with, and for, the animals.

**Help! My Dog is Jumping Up!**

Ask us about our 6 week Understanding Dogs Training / Behavior Classes, our Dog Trainer Apprentice Program, and our single-focus 2 hour Behavior Classes

## How Dogs Learn

There are 2 philosophies of training: Learning Theory and Dominance Theory. Article at <http://mishamayfoundation.org/dominance.pdf>

Dominance is defined as a relationship between individual animals that is established by force/aggression and submission, to determine who has priority access to multiple resources such as food, preferred resting spots, and mates (Bernstein 1981; Drews 1993).

...what owners really want is not to gain dominance, but to obtain the ability to influence their pets to perform behaviors willingly — which is one accepted definition of leadership (Knowles and Saxberg 1970; Yin 2009).

Learning Theory is an explanation of how learning works, and how learning happens. The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior [www.AVSABonline.org](http://www.AVSABonline.org) recommends that veterinarians identify and refer clients only to trainers and behavior consultants who understand the principles of learning theory and who focus on reinforcing desirable behaviors and removing the reinforcement for undesirable behaviors.

Learning a behavior depends upon: opportunity, motivation, physical abilities, learning. A behavior is learned with relevant, adequate motivation.

## Motivation or Why Dogs Jump Up

- 1) Between dogs: greeting behavior, food solicitation, play
- 2) In relation to humans: greeting behavior, expression of affection or excitement, desire for attention, invitation to play, curiosity
- 3) Caused by humans: inconsistent responses, lack of precise training, uncooperative visitors

## Behavior Modification

- 1) Establish your dog's motivation for jumping up.
- 2) Withdraw the motivation. The removal of a good consequence causes the behavior to become less likely.
- 3) Reinforce a desired behavior. Positive reinforcement is the presentation of a good consequence when the behavior is performed. The behavior becomes more likely.

## Stages of Learning

- 1) Acquisition of new knowledge. Dog learns what is expected; training focuses on accuracy. Everyone who lives with the dog must agree that jumping up is against the rules. The dog is ignored for jumping up and praised for sitting. EVERY TIME.
- 2) Fluency. Dog appears to have learned but can still improve; training focuses on enhancement. The dog does not get attention for jumping up and getting off, or for kind-of sort-of jumping up, or for jumping up a little.
- 3) Generalization. Dog learns that the application of the new knowledge is relevant in a variety of circumstances and situations; training supports this phase with special attention since it rarely happens automatically. Practice is required. Visitors can help. Even willing strangers can help.
- 4) Maintenance. Dog incorporates the new knowledge in his behavioral repertoire; training monitors behavior to be sure it remains at an acceptable level. This may require occasional training, specific exercises or remedial action. If the dog forgets, practice more often. Set the dog up for success. Doing it right will strengthen his understanding.

## Further Application of Behavior Principles

You can apply what you have learned today to many of your dog's unwanted behaviors. Discover dog's motivation. Withdraw motivation. Teach desired replacement behavior. Ignore unwanted behavior. Praise and reward desired replacement behavior.

The longer the dog has been jumping up, the longer it may take to change the behavior. He may get worse and try harder since it worked for him in the past. Affirm the rule. Be 100% consistent.