

# DOGS' LIFE™

VOL. 3 • NO. 3

YOUR NEWSLETTER FOR HELP WITH YOUR DOG



## How To SOLVE Behavior Problems

By Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson

Dog trainers and authors of many books on dog training and behavior including "Good Owners, Great Dogs"

**T**he first thing you must understand about so called "behavior problems" is that they are rarely a problem for the dog. Chances are he enjoys digging up your garden, tipping over the trash, jumping on you, chasing the cat or unstuffing the couch.

Problem correction, like command training, has a predictable sequence of steps you need to follow to be successful:

- Get Control Over The Behavior
- Teach A Desired Response
- Reward What You Like
- Ignore or Remove the Reward from What You Do Not Like
- Practice

### Get Control Over The Behavior

Before you can attempt any changes make sure that you are not creating the problem. If you don't give the dog what he needs — a proper diet, plenty of exercise and daily interaction — or if you give him more of something than he can handle — crate him for long hours, constantly excite him or frighten him frequently — he will not be able to give you his best.

Now prevent the mishaps until you and your dog are fully prepared. Crating, closing doors and keeping the dog on lead with you when you are home are just a few ways to minimize mischief. When you leave, confine him safely.

### Teach A Desired Response

One of your training goals is to always give your dog a way to succeed — a way to earn rewards. With problem behaviors, ask yourself is "What behavior would I prefer?"

### From the EDITOR:

72% of pet owners say that they first greet their pet when they return home; 13% greet their spouse or significant other first...

*American Animal Hospital Association Survey*

Often "sit" is an option. A dog who is sitting cannot be jumping up, stealing food from the toddler or cruising the counter top for yummys. One of the best ways to address an unwanted behavior is to spend several days or weeks working on the desired alternative until your dog will do it quickly and reliably.

Most dogs don't have any idea what you want them to do, so it's up to you to be crystal clear. If you want the dog to greet you by sitting, you'd better tell him to sit. It's all too common for owners to complain about an unwanted behavior while never teaching the dog what the wanted behavior is. By clearly directing him to the desired behavior, he quickly learns how to act appropriately.

### Reward What You Would Like

Does it seem obvious that he should be rewarded for doing the right thing? Maybe. But how often have you struggled through the door with the dog jumping up at you, you hip checking, shoving or yelling at him? When he finally gets off of you, you think "Whew, now I can get my coat off." and you ignore him. What got him the most attention? Jumping. What made the attention stop? Not jumping. With that one common and innocent action, you just taught your dog to jump longer next time.

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Or, how often have you seen him walk by with something forbidden in his mouth. You scold him and tell him to drop it and when he does, you continue to scold him? It is easy to miss an opportunity to reward the good behavior, but if you want your dog to learn, you must work to catch him doing things right. If you tell him "Drop it!" and he does, PRAISE him. Even if he just dropped what's left of a favorite shoe, it's too late to correct the chewing. All you can hope to do now is to teach him to drop things when you ask, so focus on that.

### Ignore or Remove the Reward from What You Do Not Like

Some behaviors are best simply ignored as attention of any kind, even when you are upset, can reward some dogs. For example, your dog jumps up at his dinner bowl. You say nothing but quietly turn away and put his dinner back on the counter and wait. When he stops jumping, you pick up the bowl. He jumps; you put the bowl back on the counter. Many dogs quickly learn that jumping now causes the food to move away, not toward.

Removing the reward? What does that mean? Well, picture this: You're watching TV, and the dog is sitting in front of you, staring at you. You ignore him. He woofs softly. You tell him "Quiet." He barks more loudly, you say "Quiet!"... and on you go. Finally in frustration you throw his toy in the other room in the hopes of distracting him. You just rewarded him for barking at you.

Or how about this: You're outside playing with him, and he runs to you and jumps up. You laugh and give him a hug. Oops, you



just rewarded jumping! It's an easy mistake to make and truly confusing for the dog.

### Practice

Behavior problems can't be willed away. It doesn't help to *think* about crating him or to *contemplate* setting up a training situation. **Do it.** We've seen people solve difficult canine problems for which we held out little hope of recovery. It was achieved through sheer persistence and commitment. Not every problem has a solution, but most do and that solution is 100% dependent on you. Take the time, create a miracle. 🐾

## AIREDALE TERRIER

**BREED GROUP:** Terrier

**NICKNAME:** Airedale

**ORIGIN:** Often referred to as the "King of Terriers" the Airedale Terrier is the largest of the terrier breeds. The Airedale was developed about a hundred years ago and is named for the river of Aire in Yorkshire, England. Originally known as the Waterside Terrier they were used to hunt fox, weasel, badger, otter and other vermin. They were later crossed with the Otterhound, which made the breed better swimmers. The Airedale is an extremely intelligent and versatile breed. They were one of the first breeds to be used in Germany and England for police work. During World War I Airedales were enlisted by the Russian and British armies. They also helped the Red Cross carry messages and locate wounded men. The Airedale has also been used to hunt big game in India, Africa and Canada.

**COLOR:** Black and Tan

**HEIGHT:** 22 - 24 inches (56 - 61 cm)

**WEIGHT:** 40 - 50 pounds (18 - 23 kg)

**TEMPERAMENT:** Airedale Terriers are a good natured and fun-loving breed. Their sweet disposition comes from



their hound background. They are kind, even-tempered and good with children especially if they have early exposure and socialization to them. The Airedale may try to dominate family members he sees as submissive. They generally get along with other household animals but sometimes try to dominate other dogs.

**TRAINING:** They are extremely intelligent dogs and are not difficult to train. They can be very rowdy if not properly trained and need an owner who knows how to be "Top Dog". Airedales respond best to training that has variety and is

interesting and fun oriented. They also respond better to praise than punishment.

**EXERCISE:** Being a terrier they were bred for active work, therefore they need room to run and plenty of exercise. Frequent walks are recommended. Many like to play with a ball, swim or retrieve objects. Digging can also be a favorite pastime.

**GROOMING:** Airedale Terriers have a wiry coat that is low in odor, repels dirt and sheds very little. The breed requires consistent, regular grooming. His coat may need professional attention several times a year.

**POSSIBLE HEALTH CONCERNS:** Overall a very hardy breed. Some may suffer from cancer, hip dysplasia, hypothyroidism, eye problems, allergies, skin infections or itchy skin.

**LIFE EXPECTANCY:** 10 - 12 years 🐾

# Maintaining a Healthy Adolescent Canine



By Peter H. Eeg, DVM  
Owner Poolesville Veterinary Clinic, Poolesville, Maryland

The age at which your canine friend reaches adolescence is between eight to twelve months. This is equivalent to a nine to twelve year old human.

By this time your dog should have received all of his/her vaccinations to provide adequate immunity against a number of diseases. These may vary slightly depending on where you live, but should include vaccinations for distemper, hepatitis, parainfluenza, parvo, corona, and rabies viruses. Also protection against lyme spirochete, and bordetella bacteria should have been completed.

Monthly Heartworm/Anti-parasitic medication should also have been initiated by this time in your dogs' life to further protect him/her from these debilitating and potentially fatal diseases. These

preventative medications are available in both oral and topical forms. A very new six-month injectable preventative Heartworm is also now just becoming available from your veterinarian. You should always check with your veterinarian before beginning any preventative therapy of this type.

Your adolescent canine friend should also have been neutered or spayed by this time in his/her development to prevent unwanted pregnancy and reduce the less desirable behaviors associated with the onset of the adult secondary sex characteristics. Key to this behavior modification is the reduction in roaming by both sexes in search of a suitable mate. Neutering and Spaying can also have a pronounced effect on reduction of aggression and inappropriate inter-dog interactions.

The adolescent canine is still in an active growth phase during this portion of his development to adulthood. It is very important that you work with your veterinarian to maintain the optimal level and type of nutrition for your specific breed of dog. In large and giant breed dogs specially formulated food can minimize the potential for changes to the growing joints and ligaments that could result in damage from stresses incurred during play and exercise.

Certain inherited medical conditions can begin to surface during this period of development. It is important to have a basic understanding from your veterinarian of what your specific breed of dog may be genetically susceptible to from its lineage.

The preventative measures that you institute now and the more knowledge you are forearmed with about your specific breed of canine companion can help to set the tone for your dog to have an active, healthy, and long adult life. 🐾

## Nutrition From puppyhood To ADULTHOOD: Raising Them Right and Keeping Them Healthy

Contributed by Iams

Less than a year ago you were probably chasing your cute little puppy around the house trying to teach him to sit. Today, that little puppy weighs 75 pounds and doesn't understand he's not a "lap dog." As your dog matures into adulthood, he's outgrowing the specific nutritional needs of a young puppy. He needs nutrition appropriate for his "new" body- that means a high-quality premium adult formula.

Depending on your puppy's breed size, at some point between 12 and 24 months, you should evaluate his nutritional needs and choose an appropriate adult formula. The transition to a premium adult food should begin when your dog stops growing in height. The kind of dog you have will determine the time you switch.

Small and medium breed dogs, such as Beagles and Cocker Spaniels (weighing 50 pounds or less as adults), normally mature by 12 months of age. Large and giant breed dogs, such



as Labrador Retrievers and Great Danes (50 pounds or more as adults), are ready for an adult food between 12 and 24 months.

It's also important to consider your dog's activity level when choosing the appropriate adult formula. A Golden Retriever that runs three miles with you every night will have different nutritional needs than a Dachshund who spends his days guarding the couch. Look for adult foods designed for specific life stages.

Large and giant breed dogs have unique nutritional needs as adults, just like when they were puppies. If you have a dog over 50 pounds, consider feeding an adult formula specifically formulated for large and giant breed dogs. As with any diet change, to help avoid intestinal upset or diarrhea, introduce the new food gradually over the course of four to five days.

He may not be a puppy any more, but you can help make the change to adulthood a healthy one. By providing a high-quality premium diet, the two of you are sure to spend many more happy days together. To learn more about transitioning your puppy to adult food call the Iams Pet Professionals at 1-800-863-4267 or visit Iams on the Web at [www.iams.com](http://www.iams.com). 🐾



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## Why Do Dogs Form **BARKING CHAINS?**

A Rodale Press contribution

If you live in a neighborhood with more than one dog, you will have heard the infamous “barking chain,” the canine equivalent of a musical round. One dog starts the din, and soon others in nearby yards join in. Sometimes they're all barking at the same thing, such as when a bicyclist passes each house. But at other times, it's anybody's guess what got that first dog started.

“With group activities, sometimes it's a matter of trying to look — or in this case, sound — bigger than you are,” says Mark Feinstein, Ph.D., an animal behaviorist and dean of cognitive sciences at Hampshire College in

Amherst, Massachusetts. “You see this with clustering behavior in cattle, and perhaps the barking chain is a similar thing.”

Some dogs, however, are less likely to join in. Large working breeds, such as Kuvaszok or Maremma sheepdogs, would be among the first to bow out of the barking chain because they've been bred to live among their charges, and making too much noise would upset the herds. But scent hounds such as bassets and bloodhounds are very vocal, as are terriers, whose traditional role was to bark to let their owners know they'd found game or vermin. 🐾

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## Invisible Fence **TIPS**

In order for your Invisible Fence® system to work properly, the Power Cap® battery in the Computer Collar® should be changed regularly. Battery life can be drained by several factors, including low temperatures, the number of times a dog challenges the system, and the fit of the collar on the dog's neck. On average, your Power Cap should be changed every three months. You can sign up for a battery plan through your local Invisible Fence professional.