

Dogs 101 – Targeting innate canine behaviours for ongoing success in responsible pet ownership outcomes

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Dog Training DVDs

The need for a simple and synergistic approach to canine ownership and management has been the driving force to developing the Dogs 101 information pack. This need has arisen from a massive increase in domestic dog nuisance and dog bite incidents and complaints that eat up a huge resource level of local, state and federal funds.

Also many dog owners and their neighbours reporting an ever increasing level of personal stress induced from dog behaviour affecting their lives. It has long been known that better ownership and management will be achieved through better educating dog owners on realistic principles that are based on species specific psychologically sound dog behaviour principles rather than human emotional or money orientated principles that cloud the relationship beyond the dog's scope. Dogs are living, breathing, constantly developing beings that do not work to a script and therefore can not have an ironclad guarantee placed on future performance and stability. We have to get owners to understand that temperament plus environment and experiences will equal behaviour and all these factors are relevant. So whilst Ivan Pavlov, and BF Skinner, made modern behaviour shaping techniques known to the populace it is not all that is needed to be truly successful on a broad scale.

The five basic steps of Dogs 101 is great to give lay people the nuts and bolts of how to be successful in canine ownership and management. Now, let's expand a little on some of the five areas.

For selection we have to have the human be aware of their own personal circumstances and how likely changes to these will affect future family dynamics over an average dog's lifespan. They should be considering that their preferred breed will meet the features, functions and benefits for their purposes. Psychological factors have to be considered such as correct windows of opportunity for both splitting away from the litter and social exposure outcomes as well as genetic inheritance. Socialising in the time between the split from the litter and 16 weeks needs to be the next priority and this should be best achieved by enrolling in a good puppy socialisation program that is not an early obedience course but truly based on correct and broad social exposure. Puppy socialisation should be a system that exposes the puppy to a broad range of environments and effects in a positive manner that will ensure the puppy will have a broad outlook on life so that it will have no fears or phobias and possess an aptitude for open learning. This will ensure the pup has the best social outlook on life with a balanced lifestyle based on structure of lifestyle as a lower member of a human pack.

Throughout this phase, it is based on as much positive learning as possible but not to the point of failing to achieve good leadership that is based on behavioural boundaries and humane and realistic discipline and as an adjunct, obedience training that is not based on all positive theory which usually translates into the humans mind as no responsibility or discipline and as little effort on their part as possible. We achieve this leadership via way of our social structuring program which in its basis is controlling entries and exits through gates, doors and cars as well as food and how and when it is given and controlling places of elevation and comfort also covering prime areas around the house and yard and having rules and regulations on how human and dog interactions are started and maintained.

All dangerous areas such as kitchens, garages and laundries and especially stairs have a control process placed on them to build structure but to ensure safety any human dog play is constantly monitored to ensure no competition or possession and definitely no enhancing of hunting drives which can heighten physical danger. All owners are taught that every interaction with a dog is an opportunity to shape behaviour but they must realise this could be in either the beneficial or the destructive or dangerous.

Day to day management becomes their lifestyle yardstick and all behaviour is constantly monitored in a clinical view which is based on reality and keeps the human aware of the fact that humans possess both deductive reasoning powers far superior to any other species on earth and completely different emotions and feelings and even cultures and communication so we can not expect or believe the canine species can or should prosper and cope with human emotions or beliefs that are not based on the dogs natural behaviour and psychology.

Any games are not to be those that will set up a dog human competition or build the dogs hunting or killing or even its natural possessive or destructive drives or behaviours. Hide and seek games with food or toys or even a person as the target are great for both exercise and mind stimulation. We encourage natural obstacle and agility as a way of achieving confidence and enrichment and teaching tricks and retrieve games that don't enhance prey, predatory or any possession are also utilised.

We teach people to give their dogs house time if they are house dogs but to also include controlled house time where the dog is only allowed to go and stay in a location in the house but under control. This technique allows the ability to have the dog inside and controlled regardless of others, even visitors. We encourage social outings away from the home but under control with behaviour perimeters. Balanced day to day management should include places to go such as walks, car rides and if possible controlled dog outings. We do not advocate dog parks as there is no control on other people's ideas of control or even their ideas on what is acceptable or unacceptable. Most walks or outings are orderly and controlled but do incorporate times to be dogs and check out the scent world available to the dog's superior olfactory senses. This is on the owner's decision and must be monitored so it does not finally erode leadership. With wild dogs, generally only the upper members of the pack get to do all the scent marking so owners need to be mindful of the dogs needs but also if they are truly the leaders they should have the ultimate control of when, where and why this can occur.

Citizenship is simply ensuring the dog is a great canine ambassador and has good canine etiquette. The owner has a duty to ensure all interactions with any other humans are wanted and accepted by the person. The dog owner must not allow obnoxious or assertive or even embarrassing interaction. The dog needs to be conditioned to have respectful human and dog greetings. Not all races or religions have a love for dogs and can be non-accepting or even fearful of dogs. Every person has a legal right to choose their level of human dog interaction within legal realms.

Denning or crating is a safety and behavioural benefit from the wild ancestor. Kennelling is a duty of care issue for aggressive dogs or those that are trained to guard and or protect to ensure all members of the community are safe including the very young and mentally disabled. Fencing must take into account laws and by-laws regarding rights of entry and rush, menace or cause fear rulings as well as being aware of people's spatial and public thoroughfare rights.

Restraint accounts for on lead, chained and tethered and must realise people may encroach or risk safety through ignorance, stupidity or misunderstanding. All dog owners must ensure they do not upset harmony or safety of others they have a duty of care to ensure their dogs don't disturb, destroy, devalue or deface property or lifestyles within normal bounds.

Skinner, B.F. (20.03.1904 - 18.08.1990) American Psychologist, Author 21 Books, 180 Publications - Operant Conditioning

Pavlov, I. (14.09.1849 - 27.02.1936) Russian Physiologist, Psychologist, Physician. Nobel Prize Winner - Classic Conditioning

About the Author

Craig has been a Dog Trainer since the 1980's. From the early 1990's Craig has been determined to expand his knowledge base by gaining overseas qualifications in the following areas.

- Police & Narcotics
- Mantrailing Bloodhounds
- Search & Rescue
- Therapy & Assistance Dogs

Since 2000, Craig has been heavily involved in training students from other countries and he has a contractual agreement with the largest privately owned Asian college group as a special educator providing training overseas and in Australia to Dog Training, Grooming and Veterinary students. Since the mid 1990's Craig has been developing world first odour detection dog methodology and specialist detection dog programs for Government and large corporations. Throughout this time he has been chief trainer for private police dog programs and Government detection dog programs. Many of these programs have had to go through Animal Ethics committees and independent Government validation trials for these dogs and programs to be proven operational. Craig also now delivers training for the Registered Training Organisation "Animal Industries Resource Centre" on two nationally accredited courses - Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation and Certificate IV in Companion Animal Services (Dog Training).

① Dogs do things that ~~are~~ they know stress you out, this gives them some level of control ["I said sit..."]

② Socialisation - 3 'good' outings during key period is sufficient

③ 60% wolf (-> 16 wks) behaviour - natural drives & instincts still there

④ Natural drives - Prey or play, play drive is not threatening, predatory - bite, fight, hold & kill; guarding; defence in this order. - possession & aggression.

Need to see diff between Prey play & play play. Gives up toy easily vs wants to possess & will growl, etc

⑤ Don't put your hand (or face) into any dog's face.

⑥ "possessional genes" - ↑ as dog control ↑.

⑦ If the dog is enjoying it, does not necessarily mean it's safe.

⑧ If you build high drive you need high control.

⑨ Settling in period - rescue dog or puppies - 3 weeks - then you will know what you really have.

⑩ Bonding -> Dependency -> Separation Anxiety -

⑪ Dogs can also be mentally ill (20% of people)

⑫ Temperament + Environment = Behaviour. Often we test for Behaviour not Temperament.

* 2° fear of dogs (from parents & imprinting) stronger than 1°.