

Ready, Set, Train!

Jonathan Klein's
Guide to Laying the Foundation
for Successful Dog Training



3368 S. Robertson Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(800) 400-TRAIN (8724)

www.isaidsit.com info@isaidsit.com

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Lay The Foundation For Training Success</u>	4
<u>Become A Leader</u>	4
<u>Make Your Dog Adapt To You</u>	5
<u>Put Your Dog On The “Earn A Gold Star” Program</u>	7
<u>Make Food Part Of The “Earn A Gold Star” Program</u>	8
<u>All Dogs Should Be Accustomed To Their Safe Place</u>	10
<u>Close Tethering</u>	11
<u>Crate Training</u>	12
<u>Separation Anxiety Prevention</u>	13
<u>Practice While You Are Home</u>	13
<u>How To Leave</u>	14
<u>When You Return</u>	14
<u>Don't Feel Sorry For Your Dog</u>	14
<u>Teach Good Habits And Fix Bad Behavior</u>	15
<u>Never Let Your Dog Learn The Wrong Behavior</u>	15
<u>Make Sure To Stop Letting It Practice The Wrong Things</u>	16
<u>Watch Your Progress Carefully</u>	17

Introduction

After 23 years as a professional dog trainer, and having worked with thousands of dogs, I'm just as passionate about training now as when I started. I'm equally passionate about sharing my experience on the benefits of positive dog training as well as the potentially harmful consequences of forceful and confrontational methods. This booklet is designed as an orientation to positive training methods and will work for a new dog or puppy you are bringing home or a dog you already share your home with.

I've seen over and over that in just a matter of moments a frustrated owner and a misbehaving dog can come together to form a partnership. It's a spectacular sight to see a dog go from pleading "...pet me... pay attention to me... me... meeee!" by barking, whining, jumping and nipping one minute to being calm, relaxed and in an interactive loving moment with the owner the next. The change comes when the dog can be taught to try new, good behaviors and realize success by having a positive interaction with you.

Happy Training,

Jonathan Klein, Founder of "I Said Sit!"

Lay The Foundation For Training Success

Whether you are bringing a new dog into your home, have already done training and it didn't work or just decided it's time to train your dog, there are some specific steps necessary to put both you and your dog in a new frame of mind and get the best results. As with most everything, if you start with a good foundation, the training becomes easier and more can be accomplished. If you start off on the wrong foot you may get frustrated and decide that it's just easier to tolerate the behavior and let your dog do what it wants. In the long run, that's not a good idea.

In reading through this booklet you may feel some of the lessons don't apply. Many of these suggestions are interrelated and make a difference in other areas. We strongly suggest that you incorporate all of these changes into your interaction with your dog. It is common to make the mistake of thinking that because of your needs or prior training, some of our suggestions don't apply. We want you to start at the beginning with every dog, because that is the shortest route to a successful finish. You can cut some corners later, but don't do it now. We really encourage you to work through each of the steps.

An important point to remember is that the process of creating behavioral change may cause your dog a little stress as it learns to adapt. For example, if your dog is used to having free run of the house and you suddenly restrict it, it might try to bark to get attention. Your first thought will probably be that it never did that before and therefore you shouldn't restrict it. We strongly suggest you make an extra effort to get the dog past this hurdle. A little bit of adjusting to stress now will surely prevent a lot of stress later.

Become A Leader

Anyone who has ever owned dogs knows the joy they bring to our lives, but almost any dog owner would agree that there are times when our dogs can be frustrating. This is why it's crucial

to examine the role you play in your dog's life. By avoiding misplaced punishment and instead incorporating reward-based training, you become a positive leader.

I had someone come to my school who was unsuccessful with her prior training, so I asked her to show me how she practiced training with her dog. When she asked if I wanted to see any particular exercise, I replied, "What about sit?" She turned to her dog and said, "Goldie? Do you think you'd like to be ready for me to ask you to sit yet?"

She certainly wasn't acting like a leader. To be a successful trainer, your dog must look to you as a leader, not as a person asking them to do you a favor. Being a leader doesn't mean we don't love our dogs or don't want them to be as happy as possible; however to effectively *train* them we have to approach things with a whole new attitude of leadership.

It's important to remember that if you make little or no changes to the way you interact with your dog, it can take months or even years to train your dog. In fact, your dog might never change. However, if you follow all of these steps, you can expect a noticeable change in a matter of weeks. Once your dog starts responding to the training it will bring you closer together than ever before and you'll become a team.

Make Your Dog Adapt To You

A good rule of thumb as we begin to lay the foundation for training is to think of making the dog adapt to us rather than the other way around. This has nothing to do with dominating our dogs. We want them to respect and look up to us but we certainly don't want them to be afraid of getting in trouble.

Many dogs have free run of the whole house and maybe even free access to the yard through a dog door. Often they are overfed or the food is left accessible all day. They have so many toys that none of them are special and their owner gives them whatever they want when they whine. Some owners even get

another dog just so their first dog has a friend. All this and many people still feel they are neglecting their dogs, so they give them more and then wonder why their dogs are ruling the house.

Fortunately, with a few changes you have the ability to fix that.

“I Said Sit!” Training Tip: Positive Leadership

Here are a few things you can do differently to establish positive leadership:

Instead of leaving the door open to the yard,

Close it and let the dog out when you choose.

Instead of leaving the toy basket in the den,

Put the toys away and pull out one when you want to play with the dog.

Instead of letting the dog have free run of the house,

Get it used to being in one safe area and letting it out for supervised playtime.

Instead of feeding your dog when it paws at the food cabinet,

Put the dog’s food bowl on the counter for a while before feeding time.

Instead of overfeeding because your dog is just a sweetheart,

Use treats as “Gold Stars” because he actually has been a good dog.

Instead of letting all your dogs run rampant through the house and yard,

Give them more one-on-one time with you or let them out to play separately.

By making the dog adapt to you, rather than the other way around, and by becoming a positive leader who can give or take away the “good stuff” you will have the strongest influence on your dog’s behavior. By teaching your dog to adapt to you, your frustration will be minimized and the joy of living with your dog will be increased.

Isn’t that what having a dog is all about?

Put Your Dog On The “Earn A Gold Star” Program

The goal is to create leadership and respect by not letting the dog feel like it’s entitled to everything. Your dog will learn to become more grateful if he looks to you as the provider of all good things. This is something very important to remember and may take some adjustment on your part for the training to be successful.

If your dog sits on your lap and gets kisses and snuggles for not doing anything you’re going to have a hard time using praise and physical attention as a reward. It is crucial to understand that the more you give your dog for “free,” the less ability you have to reinforce any good behavior using real life rewards.

Stop for a minute and write a list of what your dog likes. Your list will certainly include being fed, going out, playing with toys, getting treats, petting and hopefully much more. Now, examine the list and take it all away. Everything on the list from now on will be considered a “Gold Star” and you will give it to your dog only when he earns it.

Your dog will get his “stuff” back but he’s going to earn it as a reward for offering good behavior. Think of it like your dog is in school and is on the “Earn a Gold Star” program.

Of course, this isn’t about depriving your dog or being cruel but your dog needs to have some real desire for anything you plan to use as a reward. Does your dog have a special affinity for a certain toy? That’s the object you will use as a reward in training. Is there a certain treat that your dog loves? By not having an excess of it your dog would be more apt to try to behave to get it.

"I Said Sit!" Training Tip: How To Use Gold Star

Gold Stars	Ways To Earn Them
Treats Meals Toys Praise Walks Couch Time	4 feet on the floor Waiting at the door Going to their bed Doing a cute trick Sit and pause for dinner Walking on a loose leash

Make Food Part Of The "Earn A Gold Star" Program

Food is one of the most effective tools in training your dog. You know how excited most dogs get around feeding time, right? So we want to transfer that excitement to your training sessions. But to do this effectively, you need to make sure your dogs are not overfed to the point where food isn't a motivation. If your dog isn't excited to eat then this feeding plan is even more crucial to get him to realize that food has value.

You should feed your dog a good quality dry kibble 2-3 times a day. The amount of food you offer your dog should be just enough that your dog finishes each meal. Give your dog a few minutes to eat and remove the bowl. If he doesn't eat everything then he's getting too much and you'll need to cut back on the serving size. If you have more than one dog, make sure that each dog ONLY has access to and eats its own meal.

"I Said Sit!" Training Tip: Finicky Eaters

Your dog should not have unrestricted access to its food. Do not leave food available to the dog except when you provide it during mealtimes. If your dog does not eat when its food is offered, do not keep trying to get it to eat!

Please note: For dogs that are finicky about their eating I suggest keeping up this feeding routine for at least 5 days. I recommend that you DO NOT feed wet or canned food and don't doctor the food by adding people food or other inducements like broth or gravy. If you do add an inducement, make sure it is only a little flavoring and not enough for the dog to satiate itself. "High value" foods should be reserved for lessons at times the dog is distracted or times when a really special reward is in order. Regular feeding of high value food is a setup for the dog to become more entitled and less trainable.

Put aside a portion of your dog's food each day to use for lessons and for between meal snacks. This portion should only be given as a reward for the dog either doing a lesson or exhibiting some desired behavior. This carefully orchestrated use of food and training will set the dog up for success because the dog will learn to mind not only in the training sessions but at any moment throughout the day. Many people find the kibbles very handy to disperse as training treats and effectively use their dry food to facilitate their training program. This also allows you to reserve more special "high value" treats for more difficult training sessions.

If you feed your dog a raw diet or homemade food this technique becomes a little harder because that food is often so high value it becomes difficult to find something better to use to reward the dog; however as long as you are careful not to overfeed you should still see success.

Over many years I've found that incorporating training and hand feeding for good behavior will result in virtually no dog going without eating entirely. Your dog will learn in no time to finish its whole meal at every feeding.

All Dogs Should Be Accustomed To Their Safe Place

The first thing to do when you bring a new dog or puppy into your house, or decide to train your current one, is create its “safe place,” which can be its crate, an exercise pen, a small room or a dog run. This is to give your dog the easiest adjustment to its new home, make it feel safer and prevent it from learning any bad behaviors.

Whenever your dog is not in its safe place, it should be on a leash and shouldn't have free run of the house. You should either be holding the leash or have it tethered to you which will greatly help its learning to pay attention to you as well as improving its behavior on walks. Also make a place inside where you tether the dog next to its bed where it is not isolated but not in the way either.

If you are not able to supervise your dog then put it back in its “safe place.” This is also where you should leave your dog if it is home alone so it's important to accustom your dog to being in this area while you are home as well. Remember, it's not an imprisonment but a safe quiet comfortable place for your dog to stay, rest and not be able to practice any bad behaviors.

If you begin a training program with an existing dog it will stop the dog from practicing the old habits you are trying to get rid of. It will also provide a key element of leadership. Try it for long enough to make sure your dog will comfortably accept restriction. You can give it more space and more freedom after it has adjusted and when it's earned that right.

In addition to limiting the dog's access to all areas of the house you'll want to limit their access to other dogs if you have them. Also, don't make the mistake that your existing dog will “train” your new one, as that's just a setup for disaster. Make sure you supervise all play time so your dog doesn't have the chance to

find a lot of other things that are more fun than paying attention to you. It's important to remember that this is not forever, but every step you leave out will make the training slower.

“I Said Sit!” Training Tip: Your Dog's Safe Place

Your safe place should include:

- Boundary like crate, tether, pen or baby gate
- Rich environment including bedding
- Bones, toys and other chewing items
- Nothing available for the dog to damage
- Nothing dangerous like wires or chemicals

Close Tethering

One of the best ways to give your dog more access to the house while allowing it to be with you in more places is to use what we call “close tethering.” Put the dog on a short leash or cable tether attached to an anchor or piece of furniture in an area near where you're going to hang out by yourself or with the family.

Special Note: Make sure there isn't anything for the dog to get tangled on. NEVER tether your dog when you aren't home or when you can't supervise it.

This should not be viewed as punishment but as a way to give the dog structure by allowing it to have a safe place and be near you without the opportunity to roam free throughout the house. To help keep your dog comfortable provide access to its bed and give it some high value dog toys to help keep it entertained.

There are several positive results of tethering. If you do want to bring the dog with you to a park, a campground or a café, this will allow your dog to be safe without allowing it to run off. Another huge advantage is that it will very quickly allow your

dog to learn that it has the ability to solve the “pulling on the leash” problem on its own.

Do a lesson to make it easier and faster for the dog to be comfortable in its tether spot. Start by bringing the dog out exactly to the end of the tether. That way you will show it right away that it is tied up, so it shouldn’t ever be surprised or panic. The moment it starts relaxing or is not pulling on its leash reward the dog with praise and a treat.

Repeat that reward for not straining over and over again, approximately every 5 seconds. The dog learns that straining to get to us and the food does not bring a response. It does understand that sitting or lying in a relaxed position is what delivers the reward. If you regularly practice having your dog tethered near its bed with a bone, rawhide, or a toy that it can chew on, the dog will effectively be learning a “Down-Stay” all by itself.

Crate Training

Using a crate is another way of creating some boundaries. A crate is a safe, quiet place to restrict your dog and should not be used as a punishment. It’s also important to accustom your dog to a crate to avoid problems if the dog should ever have to be confined in the future. A visit to the vet, groomer or any transport of your pet will most likely involve some crating so it’s best to get your dog accustomed to it at home first. Also crate training is wonderful for house breaking or even just giving the dog and the family some quiet time.

There are lots of ways you can go about crate training. You can leave the door open and let the dog wander in and out. You can feed it in the crate or put all the toys in the crate and let the dog explore to get them out. You can shape the behavior by clicker training when the dog is near the crate and then tossing a treat into the crate. When it stays longer and closer, you can click and treat for it actually staying in the crate with the door open.

Ultimately you will put your dog in the crate and close the door. It should have nice bedding and toys or chews that will keep it comfortable and happy. **It’s important to let your dog out before it soils or panics, but if you introduce the crate gradually, that should not happen.** If the dog does throw a tantrum and you know that it doesn’t need to use the bathroom and that there is no other extreme stress, then wait the dog out. Don’t let the dog out when it asks to get out; instead get it to be calm or quiet for at least a few minutes before letting it out. In time the crate will actually be more of a sanctuary for the dog and it will like being in there.

Separation Anxiety Prevention

We want our dogs to become accustomed to being alone and the best way to do that is when you’re at home together. We build the dog’s independence and confidence by teaching them to respect us as kind, caring leaders. We need to teach our dogs that there is going to be alone time and quiet time every day.

“I Said Sit!” Training Tip: Prevent Separation Anxiety

- ◆ Get your dog accustomed to its place when you are home
- ◆ Don’t emphasize departures or returns, and never punish upon returning
- ◆ Avoid long periods of cuddling, lap time, and avoid carrying your dog or allowing it to sleep in your bed

Practice While You Are Home

To work on getting the dog used to being alone you will want to put it in its safe place and just go about your business around the house without making a fuss over it. Usually the more central it is in the home the faster the dog will adjust. Practice restricting your dog in its safe place several times a

day when you are home as well as keeping him there when you leave him home alone. One way we can unknowingly contribute to our dog's stress is if we make a big deal about coming or going so the more matter-of-fact you are the better.

How To Leave

When you leave, you can certainly do things to make the dog feel less alone. Leaving on radio or television tuned to a talk rather than music station is helpful. I know a number of people who have had success recording their own voice on a continuous loop on their computer and playing that for their dog when they aren't home.

To prepare your dog for your departure put it in its place well in advance of your leaving so it will have time to settle down. Don't make any big issue out of leaving. Some dogs will bark out of boredom so to help keep them mentally stimulated try hiding kibble bite-sized dog chews or some 'puzzle toys' that can be filled with food, which gives them a project to keep them busy.

When You Return

When you return home you'll want to make sure not to put any more emphasis on it than when you left so when you walk in don't go to the dog right away. You'll want to wait about five minutes before greeting the dog calmly. Don't get over gushy with your greeting and certainly never punish or chastise the dog in any way if you walk in on an 'accident' or some damage.

Don't Feel Sorry For Your Dog

Dogs can learn what not to do just as easily as they learn what's right. And while your instinct may be to soothe your dog so he'll stop barking the best course of action is to ignore it and reward him when he's quiet. This is part of the "**Learn to Earn a Gold Star**" approach to training where we only reward our dogs when they exhibit good behavior on their own. When your dog is quiet it's time to make contact. What he learns is

that when he's quiet he gets your attention and when he barks, he doesn't.

But remember, you **never** want to punish your dog for stress-induced behavior. This only adds to the stress and exacerbates the problem.

Separation anxiety can be hard on you, the neighbors and most certainly your dog. You can prevent it from ever becoming a problem by applying these basic steps consistently.

Punishment will make it worse so remember to praise the 'good' and ignore the 'bad,' and you'll be well on your way to having a happy, well-adjusted and secure dog.

Teach Good Habits And Fix Bad Behavior

Never Let Your Dog Learn The Wrong Behavior

Dogs are not born with bad habits; they learn and develop them over time. Remember that your dog is always learning, so for practical purposes you are always in training. That's why the more you control the environment and are diligent in your training the faster you will see results. The more random your training, the more hit and miss the outcome will be and the more frustration both you and the dog will feel.

Never forget that your dog can learn bad behavior just as easily as it can learn good behavior. By taking a strong leadership role, limiting your dog's access in the home, monitoring its food intake and encouraging its successes while avoiding failures, you will have laid the kind of foundation that results in faster, easier and more successful training.

The goal is to prevent bad behavior, not stop it. Instead of thinking about how to deal with bad behavior after it happens think about how to prevent the bad behavior from happening in the first place. If you rush to stop bad behavior when it's taking place you are actually giving the dog attention, albeit

negative attention, at exactly the wrong time. Of course, don't let your dog continue to do something really harmful but overall the focus should be on rewarding the dog at the exact moment it behaves the way you want it to.

Make Sure To Stop Letting It Practice The Wrong Things

The causative approach to dog training is based on determining the root cause of the bad behavior and removing it through positive training methods. If you just treat the symptoms, particularly with punishment, not only will the reasons for the bad behavior continue to exist but also the dog can suffer irreparable harm.

Your dog will become an expert at behavior that it is allowed to practice. Also, any behavior that is reinforced on a random schedule becomes a stronger behavior. Breaking this cycle is the key to eliminating behavior problems. You need to control the environment, the dog and the training enough that you are successful at preventing the behavior from continuing and absolutely make sure it doesn't get worse.

"I Said Sit!" Training Tip: Preventing Bad Behavior

Instead of letting the dog run up to the door and bark and jump on guests,

Keep it on leash and have it sit nicely away from door before getting petted.

Instead of letting your dog bark at everyone passing the front window,

Block it into the back half of the house with a gate.

Instead of letting the dog use the dog door and dig in the yard,

Close the dog door and go into the yard with the dog when it is outside.

Instead of pet proofing by putting stuff out of the dog's reach,

Keep your dog somewhere where it actually doesn't have access to any area where it might get into mischief.

Watch Your Progress Carefully

The most effective training is done before the problems occur, which is referred to as keeping your dog below threshold. If your dog has a high level of anxiety or reactivity, it is important that you begin your lessons in a setting where the dog is emotionally ready to learn. Start your sessions in areas without distracting or problematic stimuli so that you remain successful. In time you will reintroduce the dog to those more difficult situations, but not until you already know how your dog is going to react and exactly what your training plan will be to prevent and counter a bad reaction.

Remember that all training is a process. Your dog can always learn more and there is always more to do or something that you could have done differently. Be aware of your progress. It is often worthwhile to make a record, so that you can go back and remember how your dog behaved before you started. You have begun to do just what you need to in order to have a better dog, and certainly to have your dog be the best it can be.

Happy Training!

Notes:

Call to Set Up Your Free Meet 'n' Greet*

We would love for you and your dog
to visit our School for Dogs.

Come see the facility and discuss training options.

(800) 400-TRAIN (8724)

**Aggression cases require a paid consultation*

For further information on training programs go to:
www.isaidsit.com

For more of Jonathan's training tips and articles go to:
www.thedogbehaviorexpert.com

To see our training videos go to:
www.youtube.com/user/dogprola