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Dogs That Jump on People

Karen Reese, CPDT-KA, ACDBC, Fear Free Certified Animal Trainer

Jumping is a natural greeting and play behavior for dogs. Since most people don't enjoy being jumped on by dogs, especially larger dogs, it is important to teach dogs that jump on people how to greet more appropriately.

If your dog has a problem of jumping on people it is important that you start by setting the example of what is a polite greeting with yourself. If you allow your dog to jump up on you then your dog may become confused if he is not allowed to jump on other people. Here are some tips on teaching your dog to not jump on people.

- 1. Make greetings mellow.** When you arrive home your dog will likely be excited to see you and will be most likely to jump up to greet you during this time. If this is true for your dog, completely ignore your dog until they calm down. Don't talk to, touch, or look at your dog until they have settled down. Once your dog has settled down, you can greet your dog by getting down to their level and saying hello. Everyone that comes into your house should greet your dog in the same way.
- 2. Reward your dog when he isn't jumping.** Many times we forget to acknowledge our dogs when they are doing the right thing and we only seem to recognize the things that they do wrong. If this is the case with your dog, when he isn't jumping, give him lots of attention, praise, treats, and toys. If he jumps up during that time, turn your side and walk away. When done consistently, your dog will learn that all the great things happen when he has all of his feet on the floor and your attention is withdrawn when his feet come off the floor.
- 3. Set your dog up for success.** One of the hardest things about training dogs that jump on people is training the *people* to not reward your dog when he jumps on them! This can be really hard for your dog to understand that he shouldn't jump on people if when he jumps he gets attention from other people. If you know ahead of time that your dog might jump on someone you should either have your dog on leash during those times so you can walk your dog away if they jump up or you can put your dog in another room or outside for a bit to prevent him from practicing jumping on people. After he has had a moment to settle down, ask your guests to come down to his level to greet him, for large dogs this may mean sitting down so they don't get knocked over.

Since affectionate face greetings are a deeply ingrained behavior from puppyhood, it is up to you to teach your dog how to greet appropriately in human interactions.

For behavior and training advice, please contact Operation Kindness at behavior@operationkindness.org or visit www.operationkindness.org/training.