

Jumping

Contributed by Admin
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Puppies naturally jump up on people as a way of greeting or expressing excitement. We inadvertently reinforce this behavior by verbally or physically responding to it. But before long the puppy is a dog and his greeting with paws on our shoulder, eyeball to eyeball, is not very welcome.

In the dog world, jumping up is natural! A dog jumps because he is showing an interest in playing. He jumps as a prelude to fighting, as the beginning of a sexual dance, or to assert his dominance.

We unwittingly encourage this natural behavior by giving it attention. Some people even catch their small dog in a mid-air jump or pick him up by his shoulders and plop him on their lap. This tells the dog that jumping behavior is okay. Your high pitched, excited voice, delights your dog and gives him the signal of approval. Some caregivers are inconsistent, allowing their dog to jump on the furniture but not on them. Jumping is jumping, and if you want to stop it, you must be consistent.

There are many things you can do to correct this behavior. Upon first seeing your dog after a long day, you must talk to him in a low, soft voice and get down to his level so there is no need for him to jump up to give you that kiss. You must give him more exercise to help release some of that jumping energy. You must be consistent. Jumping on people and furniture must both be stopped. Obedience training will help establish your leadership so that when you yell "OFF!" the first time, your dog will believe it and will not repeat that mistake again. You yell because you want to startle him into attention.

The key is to catch your dog in the act of jumping on something and then consistently give him the verbal reprimand "OFF!" followed by a command to do something else like "sit," followed by a food tidbit and/or praise. There is no need to knee your dog or step on his toes. If he jumps up on you, scream, "OFF!" Then, when he backs off, say, "Sit." Then, say, "Good dog!" Your dog will soon learn to approach you and sit. Keep food temptations off of the counters to discourage his jumping up on them. If he jumps on the counter, say, "Off." If he pays no attention, rattle a shake can (an empty pop can with a few rocks inside and the hole taped closed).

Teach your dog to jump on the bed or furniture by saying, "Okay," and after he jumps on, give him a food tidbit followed by praise. Then when you want him off, say, "OFF!" and complete the training routine. In other words, teach him to get on the furniture only when you give him permission with a verbal cue such as "Okay." If you never want him on the bed or furniture, never give him the verbal cue.

You can keep him off of the counters and furniture when you are not at home by using a vibration alarm.

