



Play To Behave

GET STARTED: Change How Your Dog Greet Other Dogs and People

Do you cringe every time someone visits because of the way your puppy or dog greets them? How about when you are outside the house and another dog or person gets close? Do they pull on the leash and even stand up on two legs to get to them? Have you tried to fix this, yet nothing seems to be working?

Here's what you need to know to get started changing that behavior, so you can relax and enjoy time with friends and family:

- * **AGE:** Think about how long your puppy or dog has been alive. Even if your dog is an adult, their brain is probably similar to that of a 3 year old child. So, always keep your puppy or dog's age in mind. Until your dog is 2 1/2 to 3 years old, they can - depending on temperament, personality, breed and more - also have a difficult time controlling their behavior. But you can help this along with the right interaction and training.
- * **PREVENTION:** Prevention is critical to change your dog's behavior - *you must prevent the behavior you don't want otherwise, it's much more difficult, sometimes impossible, to change it.* When you allow the unwanted behavior to continue, your dog can get confused about which behavior is acceptable and therefore take longer to correct. You might get impatient too which can easily affect your interaction and training.

These are four things you can do to PREVENT your dog from jumping, pulling and doing other inappropriate greetings (solving it comes later):

1. **Prevent access** to people and dogs where this behavior happens. This isn't permanent but, it is necessary in the beginning.
 2. **Physical Barriers:** Solving this issue outside the house, starts inside. Use physical barriers like crates, gates, a bedroom, a leash or other ways that keep your dog from jumping or greeting inappropriately.
 3. **Provide another activity** ahead of time to keep your dog busy and less interested in the other dogs or people when they arrive, such as a new bone or toy. (Be careful with bones if other dogs are involved.)
 4. **Teach the behavior that you want** when your dog greets others and/or teach a behavior that is incompatible with the jumping, pulling or other inappropriate greeting behavior. This, of course, takes time but the point is to prevent the behavior you don't want, but also teach the behavior you DO want.
- * **QUICK PREVENTION:** A couple quick ways to prevent jumping before it starts:
 - **Toys:** Have toys ready by the door in a basket so you can distract your dog. Before your dog has a chance to jump, you or your friend who has come over to visit can throw your dog's favorite toy for them to chase, and before they get back to you, you can throw another toy or be ready to greet them and provide the attention they want in a way that suits you.
 - **Food Rewards:** Be ready with treats. While a toy is usually best because it helps with your dog's energy, if your dog gets overexcited by toys or if toys don't work well with your dog, then food rewards or treats can work wonders. *Just be sure to have your hand with the treat down on their level or let them see it as you drop it, **before** they get to you.* Again, the



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- idea is to disrupt the behavior of jumping before it starts so you can have a chance to control how you or others greet your dog.

- * **NOTE: The preventive steps** are intended to get you some control over your dog inside your home which is important before you can get control in other situations. **Also, using toys or treats are not the best solutions if your dog is trying to greet other dogs.** You don't want to introduce food or toys because they could cause a fight! **They are also not appropriate or safe if your dog tends to guard toys or food.**
- * **TRAINING METHODS:** Think carefully before you choose training methods. Fear or force might be needed with a dog, **in a moment, for protection.** That is understandable. But **any methods that involve fear or force, including choke chains, prong collars, shock collars and even squirt bottles or pennies-in-a-can, for example, are not needed for teaching or training.** These measures can over-stimulate your dog even more, making your dog's behavior worse. I don't need to use anything that frightens or hurts my hard-headed, driven, protective, extremely active Australian Shepherds for teaching or training, neither do my students or clients with their dogs... *and neither do you.*
- * **"SAY PLEASE!":** Small changes in any behavior can lead to improvements in other areas. You will want your dog to develop good self-control and look to you for direction when they are unsure of what to do next.

The best and easiest way to encourage self-control and to look to you for direction, is to expect your dog to "Say Please!" for anything rewarding and all interactions. This means your dog will offer you a behavior before your dog gets ANYTHING they want. This is usually a "sit" but you can choose a "hand touch" or another behavior if you like. Expecting your dog to sit before any interaction or reward is the same as requiring a child to "Say Please" before they get a cookie. For your dog, this can include going into their crate, going up or down the stairs, jumping on the couch, playing with a ball - anything and everything you can think of... and more. ;)

Within a week or two, you should see a big difference. This will help with your dog's greetings, and actually, in general, with all behavior.

- * **A SIMPLE SYSTEM:** To make greetings in your house easier, you can use the same simple and easy system I use with my clients. I will be sharing this system in a **live webinar coming soon.** Following the webinar, if you want to work on more of your dog's behavior, you can join in on a course I am developing.

Once you have your dog behaving well indoors then you can work on behavior outside. Watch for suggestions and training you can do to exercise your dog, both mentally and physically, without exposing your dog to other dogs and people when taking a walk.



CHEW ON THIS!

Your relationship affects how your dog thinks, feels and behaves...
 so it's important to interact and train your dog, in a way,
 that strengthens the thoughts and feelings your dog needs
 ...to get the behavior you want.