



The Underdog Training "So Your Dog" Series, Topic Five

So Your Dog- Jumps Up on People

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Do you have a dog that jumps on people? Tired of muddy paws, scratches and torn clothing? While jumping up is one of the most common behaviour problems faced by dog owners, the good news is- it tends to be straightforward to resolve. Dogs jump up for a variety of reasons and jumping up issues can often worsen over time so it's important to get started sooner rather than later!

Why does my dog jump up?

- Attention seeking, many dogs start jumping up as a way to seek attention from people. If this attention is gained it reinforces the behaviour.
- Excess excitability- particularly when people greet the dog after an absence.
- The dog has not been taught how to greet without jumping up.
- The dog pulls on lead and uses the pressure on their collar/ harness to balance, thus standing on their hind legs to greet.
- The dog perceives being told off for jumping (pushing the dog away or verbally saying "no") up as a reward.
- Lack of exercise and stimulation
- Lack of human contact and socialisation

How to stop your dog jumping up

- **Eliminate any rewards** the dog is receiving. When considering the rewards the dog is receiving it's important to look at it from the dog's point of view. In many cases, although we think we are correcting the dog by pushing them away or saying no- the dog actually perceives this as a reward. AVOID touching or speaking to the dog when they do jump up.
- **Ensure visitors to the home** or strangers in the street do NOT pat or speak to the dog as they jump up.
- Avoid immediately greeting the dog upon your arrival home. Wait for the dog to calm before allowing them inside or going out to greet them after an absence.
- **When the dog does jump up**, step toward the dog rather than away from them, insisting that they move out of your space. Step toward the dog until they yield and move out of the way. This is an important spatial awareness exercise as many dogs who jump up lack spatial awareness and don't understand they need to move away. To gain an even better result with this exercise, each time you move toward the dog when they are not jumping and they politely move out of the way, reinforce this with a food reward thrown in the direction they are moving.
- **Teach self-control.** One of the best self-control exercises involves the manipulation of food and toys depending on the dog's behaviour. While remaining silent, simply hold some food (a treat or the dogs food bowl can be used) at chest height to start with, out of the reach of the dog. If the dog jumps up, immediately hold the food higher, out of the dogs reach. As they stop jumping, return the food to the original height it was held and if the dog does not jump or preferably offers a sit position- immediately provide the reward the dog. The food can be quickly given to the dog from hand or dropped on the ground if the dog is likely to jump as the food is delivered. Some dogs will jump multiple times before offering four paws on the ground- simply repeat the above depending on the dog's response. Over a number of sessions gradually reduce the height at which the food is held- the closer the food to the dogs head, the more difficult to the exercise. Once the dog can have the food held close to their head without jumping, increase the duration the food is held before providing to the dog- this will help the dog to develop self-control. Once the dog can hold the position for 1 minute, go back to short periods of time (no more than 5 seconds) and increase the level of distraction- talking to the dog in a happy tone, patting the dog etc. Once the dog can do this well with you, ask others to repeat the exercise with the dog
- **Keep a lead on the dog** when visitors arrive at the house so you can prevent the mad dash to the door and subsequent over excited behaviour. Only allow the dog to greet when he/ she is calm- if in greeting the dog jumps, immediately remove them for a minute then provide another opportunity.
- **NEVER allow the dog to greet** visitors in an over excited state where they are likely to jump
- **Teach the dog to sit** with the command hello- this can be done in addition to your normal sit on sit command. After a number of repetitions this will translate to an automatic sit when someone says hello to the dog.
- **Increase the amount of training**, exercise and stimulation your dog receives on a daily basis and attend obedience classes with the dog
- **Increase the quality human contact** the dog experiences each day
- **Teach the dog to walk well** on lead so they cannot use their collar/ harness as a way to balance on their hind legs and jump. (See "So Your Dog- Pulls on the lead" for further information regarding teaching your dog to walk well)
- **Consistency, Consistency, Consistency-** every reward the dog received for jumping up will make extinguishing the behaviour much more difficult!!

The information provided in the So Your Dog Series is general in nature. We recommend seeing a qualified dog trainer and having a veterinary examination completed for the best results in resolving your dogs problems. For further information or training options, go to www.underdogtraining.com.au