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✧ Highlights ✧

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Why do dogs bark? Understanding canine communication

Dogs bark for many reasons—it's a key way of expressing themselves. Understanding the "why" behind your dog's barking allows you to stop the barking effectively using positive, force-free methods.

Communication first: Barking is a natural behavior and a big part of canine communication. Dogs might bark to alert you to potential dangers, express excitement, or let you know they're feeling bored, lonely, or anxious. Understanding the context is key.

What's the trigger? Observe your dog's environment and behavior to pinpoint triggers. Are they barking at passersby, during play, or when left alone? Identifying the root cause helps guide your approach.

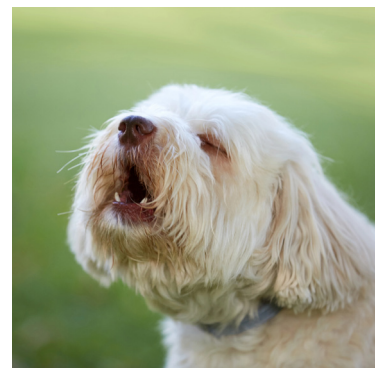
Redirect and reward: Replace excessive barking with an alternative, desirable behavior. For instance, if your dog barks at the doorbell, train them to go to a mat when they hear it. Reinforce this new behavior with treats, toys, or praise.

Enrich their day: Many dogs bark out of boredom. Increase mental stimulation with puzzle toys, interactive games, or short training sessions. Physical exercise is equally important—physically fulfilled dogs are less likely to bark excessively.

Desensitize gradually: If your dog barks at specific triggers, like other dogs, training can help. Introduce the trigger at a distance where your dog is calm, reward their quiet behavior, and slowly decrease the distance over time. A qualified trainer can show you how best to do this.

Patience is key: Addressing barking takes consistency and time. Avoid punishment, which can confuse your dog or make barking worse. Instead, focus on celebrating small successes and building trust through positive reinforcement.

Barking isn't "bad"—it's your dog's voice. With understanding and patience, you can help your dog channel their communication in ways that don't make you reach for the earplugs.



"Dogs' lives are too short.
Their only fault, really."
—Agnes Sligh Turnbull

DID YOU KNOW?

These sleepy dog facts?

Dogs sure know how to snooze, and their sleeping habits are as fascinating as they are adorable!

Dream on: Like us, dogs experience REM sleep, the stage where dreams occur. That twitching paw? They're probably chasing squirrels in dreamland!

Sleep styles: Some dogs curl up tight for warmth, while others sprawl out to cool off. Their sleeping position can hint at how comfortable they feel.

Big sleepers: Dogs sleep an average of 12–14 hours a day. Puppies, seniors, and larger breeds often need even more rest to recharge.

Dog sleep is more than just cute—it's essential for their health and happiness. So, the next time your pup dozes off, let them catch those Z's guilt-free!



A WORLD OF DOGS

The truth about dogs

Dogs have been part of human lives for thousands of years, and with that companionship comes a host of myths and superstitions. Let's debunk a few common beliefs and uncover the truth about our canine friends.

Myth 1: A wagging tail always means a happy dog.

While tail wagging often signals happiness, it can also indicate other emotions like fear, stress, or excitement. The key is to look at the whole body language—like ears, posture, and facial expression—for the full story.

Myth 2: Dogs see in black and white.

It's a popular belief, but dogs actually see the world mainly in shades of blue and yellow. While their color perception is limited compared to humans, they don't live in a black-and-white world.

Myth 3: Old dogs can't learn new tricks.

This saying is far from true! With patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement, dogs of any age can learn new behaviors. Training can even keep senior dogs mentally stimulated and engaged.

Myth 4: Dogs' mouths are cleaner than humans'.

Dogs' mouths contain their own mix of bacteria, which aren't necessarily cleaner—just different. Regular dental care is essential to keep your dog's mouth healthy.

Myth 5: A cold, wet nose means a healthy dog.

A dog's nose can be warm or dry for many reasons, including the weather or waking from sleep. Health is better judged by energy levels, appetite, and behavior than by the state of their nose.

Myth 6: One dog year equals seven human years.

A dog's aging process varies by breed and size. Larger dogs age faster than smaller breeds, making the "seven-year rule" a rough oversimplification.

While these myths may be rooted in tradition or misunderstanding, it's always best to rely on science and expert advice when it comes to understanding our dogs. Debunking misconceptions deepens our understanding, making it easier to meet our best friend's needs.



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DOGS IN ACTION

Canine considerations for active families

Does your family love outdoor adventures? Some dog breeds thrive more in active environments than others. That said, breed traits aren't guarantees, and every dog—regardless of breed—needs a balance of exercise and rest.



Energetic companions: Breeds like Labrador Retrievers, Border Collies, and Australian Shepherds are renowned for their love of activity. These dogs excel at hiking, running, and games like fetch or frisbee, making them great for families who spend time outdoors.

Smaller active breeds: Don't overlook compact breeds like Jack Russell Terriers or Miniature Schnauzers. These little dynamos are bursting with energy and love participating in family fun.

Hidden gems: Less obvious choices, like Whippets, Basset Hounds, or mixed breeds, can thrive in active households with the right encouragement and training. What matters most is matching the dog's individual personality and energy level with your family's activities.

Rest is vital: Even the most active breeds need downtime. Provide your dog with a quiet space for rest and recovery after a busy day.

The best dog for your family is one whose needs align with your lifestyle. This is key to setting both you and your new companion up for success.



HEALTHY DOG

Preventing common dog injuries during playtime

Playtime is vital for your dog's health and happiness, but safety should always come first to avoid unnecessary injuries.

Choose the right toys: Select toys that are size-appropriate and durable. Avoid those that are too small (choking hazard) or too hard, which can damage teeth.

Play on safe surfaces: Slippery or uneven surfaces can lead to falls, sprains, or strains. Grass, sand, or rubber flooring is best for energetic activities.

Supervise interactions: Monitor your dog when they play with others. Even friendly roughhousing can escalate, leading to accidental nips or injuries.

Warm up before play: Dogs, like humans, benefit from warming up. A short walk or gentle game helps prevent muscle strains during vigorous activities.

Stay hydrated: Ensure your dog has access to water, especially during high-energy play.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Irish Setter

Known for their striking red coats and boundless enthusiasm, Irish Setters are graceful, athletic dogs originally bred as bird hunters. Their sleek, feathery coats and playful expressions make them stand out in any crowd.

Irish Setters are loving and social, thriving in households where they can be part of the action. These energetic dogs require plenty of exercise—think long walks, runs, or games of fetch. They are particularly skilled at field sports like retrieval, thanks to their origins as hunting dogs.

Despite their lively demeanor, Irish Setters are gentle and affectionate companions, making them excellent family dogs. However, their exuberance can be overwhelming for very young children or households that aren't ready for their high-energy needs.

Irish Setters' luxurious coats require regular brushing to keep them looking their best, but their friendly, outgoing nature makes the extra grooming effort worthwhile.

To give an Irish Setter a home, search online for a rescue group near you.



OUR SERVICES

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Capturing those perfect pooch pics

Taking great photos of your dog can be tricky, but with these tips will help you capture frame-worthy shots of your furry friend.

Get on their level: If you can, kneel or lie down to shoot from your dog's eye level. This perspective creates more intimate and engaging images.

Use natural light: Opt for soft, natural light, like early morning or late afternoon, to avoid harsh shadows. Outdoors or near a large window are ideal.

Be patient: Give your dog time to settle or play before snapping your shot. A squeaky toy can be a good way to catch their attention.

Focus on the eyes: The eyes convey personality and emotion, making them the key to a captivating photo.

Action shots: Use burst mode to capture your dog in motion, such as during a run or leap.

With these tips, you'll be well on your way to creating stunning portraits of your pooch!



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