



**CLINICAL ANIMAL
BEHAVIOURIST & TRAINER**

Nurturing Pet & Owner Relationships



INFORMATION SHEET

TACKLING JUMPING UP

Jumping is a natural dog behaviour but it can be a frustrating one for owners...

Puppies learn to jump up at an early age; it can be prompted by numerous factors such as to solicit attention, play, to gain physical contact, frustration, anxiousness, seeking reassurance, neurological disorder[s], where food is held in temptation's reach, and over-dependence (seen when reuniting with the owner, even if separation has been fleeting).

How you respond influences your puppy's behaviour. We can unwittingly reward jumping when greeting our dog, by saying "No/Down/Off" or pushing them down. That's because the dog has succeeded in gaining your attention which he wanted, so the behaviour is repeated. To reduce jumping we need to understand what's causing it in the first place and deal with that; whether that it's boredom, hunger, needing to toilet, they're in pain (e.g. teething/tummy/urinary issues common in young dogs). Then we need to train alternative responses in various contexts where typically jumping would occur, such as someone walking past, visitor arrivals, when chatting to someone in the park. This should be in conjunction with management - the puppy is on-lead so you can reduce the practice of jumping in the first place.

If you only attempt to deal with jumping in that moment in time, you'll set your dog up for failure. That's because they'll be in 'reacting brain' not 'thinking brain'. So, controlled set ups are required! This means, have your dog on-lead with plenty of food with you. Create some distance from a helper; ask them to walk past slowly. As they do so, mark & reward your dog at high frequency whilst all 4 paws remain on the floor. Over your repetitions, increase the speed at which the person walks by, so eventually they may be skipping, jogging, running past or even doing star jumps in proximity. All the while, your dog is rewarded for remaining calm around such triggers, staying rooted to the floor.

If you don't have any helpers, you can do this yourself: slowly moving back and forth, around your dog, progressing to bending down, marching, little jumps etc - all the while marking and rewarding calmness, placing the food on the floor to maximise success. This helps the dog get used to the idea that when such exciting things happen, they remain on the floor. Practice and consistency is the key to success.

Practice what you want

- When your dog jumps up, step back. Their paws will fall onto the floor
- When all 4 paws are on the floor, mark (e.g. "yes"/click) & reward. This teaches him that calm behaviour = attention from you
- Aim to increase the duration the paws remain on the floor before you mark & reward
- Avoid shouting or pushing your dog away. This can increase frustration and escalate behaviour (e.g. grabbing and even biting)
- If your dog moves towards the sofa/table/counter-top, recall them to you - reward an alternative appropriate behaviour. DON'T wait for the problem to happen
- If puppy is at the counter/on the sofa - go to puppy and perform a lured-recall away. High value food to the nose and recall, moving backwards so your dog follows you. Mark & reward in another area and shut the baby gate/pull dog panels across or shut the door to the area.
- Avoid placing temptations in puppy's reach