

The Collared Scholar

Effective Communication



Communication

This is perhaps the most important aspect of your training. Clearly communicating what you expect of Fido is the key to building a rewarding relationship. Remember the following guidelines:

- Only ask once...never repeat a command a second time
- If Fido complies with your request, reward him immediately
- If Fido chooses not to listen, correct him immediately
- Timing is everything – be sure Fido receives rewards/consequences immediately following his actions so that he is aware that the action = the reward
- Be consistent with your words and gestures – otherwise Fido will get confused!

Command Giving

- Only give a command when you are sure your dog will obey it or you can enforce it immediately. If your dog is on leash and you command him to sit, but he doesn't obey, you can enforce that command quickly. If your dog is in a field and you give the come command and he doesn't obey you can't enforce that command quickly. When your dog doesn't obey a command and you can't enforce it quickly that command gets undermined.
- Always say the dog's name with the command. Saying the dog's name will get his attention and will lengthen the command giving time to giving more time to process the command. In addition, this will help him to know when a command is meant for him, after all, he's not to come in the dog park every time an owner tells their dog to come?
- Give your commands only once. Say it just one time. If your dog doesn't obey your command, then enforce it.
- Be consistent with your command words. If you decide to use the word "come" as your recall command, but also use "c'mon" you stand a good chance at confusing your dog.
- No laughing or smiling when the dog doesn't obey a command. A dog can make you laugh even when not obeying a command, but remember, a happy face tells the dog what he is doing is making you happy.

The Release Command - The release command frees your dog from commands - It is like "at ease". Without using a release command for a continuing command such as stay, one second you want the dog to obey the next you don't care? The dog is to stay until you give the release command.

The Come Command - Try not to associate negative feelings with the come command. Don't make your dog come to you to be punished or when you are angry. Try not to always use to leave a dog park or to cut his nails or anything he might dislike.

Remember, Practice makes perfect. Be sure to practice your commands on a daily basis. Try not to get frustrated if Fido is struggling to understand...he will only sense your frustration that in turn will cause him to become even more unruly. Understand that these words are foreign to him and he is trying his best to please you. And most importantly, HAVE FUN! The more fun training is for Fido, the faster he will learn!

