

## Lesson 6: Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump Up on People



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The importance of this lesson may depend on the size of your dog. A dog the size of a Chihuahua jumping up on you (or visitors as they come through your door) won't create quite the same problem as a 100-pound bear of a dog. But then again, muddy paws are messy, regardless of their size. And some visitors may not enjoy being "greeted" by any jumping dog.

Teaching your dog not to jump up on people will take extra time and patience because dogs naturally greet friends and family by sniffing or licking each other's muzzles. Your "muzzle" is too high, so they try to jump up to reach it. They're not being rude or pushy; they're being sociable! We just need to train them to be sociable in human terms.

You'll need a volunteer to help you with this lesson.

### Lesson 6: Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump Up on People

Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

#### For Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump on Visitors:

1. Load up your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
2. Take your dog near the door where you and your visitors most often come into the house. (You and your dog will be inside the house.)

3. Ask your helper to come through the door and, as soon as your dog gets within a few feet, have your helper ask your dog to **sit** in a low, calm voice.
4. If your dog sits, immediately praise him and give him a treat. (Your helper makes the request, but you provide the reward for correct behavior.)
5. Repeat this exercise five times.

### **If your dog doesn't do what you want**

If your dog doesn't sit when asked to do so by your helper, move in front of your dog (so you're facing him) and ask him to sit yourself. Immediately reward his correct behavior with praise and a treat. Practice this a couple of times: after your helper comes through the door, you step in front of your dog as he approaches the helper, face your dog and ask him to sit, then give the reward. After he sits successfully for you two or three times, ask your helper to ask your dog to sit after coming through the door.

If your dog still won't sit and keeps trying to jump up on your helper, don't raise your voice or show impatience; your dog is probably just a bit too excited about greeting your helper. Instead, when your dog doesn't sit as asked by your helper, instruct your helper to abruptly turn his back on your dog, walk outside and close the door. If your dog then turns to you, do the same—turn your back on your dog. After about 10 seconds, have your helper come back in, approach your dog again and ask him to sit... and again turn his back, walk out and close the door if your dog does not comply. Have your helper keep doing this until your dog sits as requested—then immediately reward your dog with praise and several treats for (finally!) calming down and doing as asked!

**Note:** If you can get more than one person to volunteer to help you with this lesson, individually at various times, your dog will more quickly learn the correct response (sitting, not jumping) for anyone who comes into the house.

### **For Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump on You:**

1. Think of situations in which your dog is likely to jump on you, and be prepared to ask him to sit before he can do so... ideally, when he gets within six feet of you.
2. Practice training sessions where you go out and come back into the house, through various doors. Use the same methods as mentioned above: ask your dog to sit after you come in, and immediately reward the correct response.
3. Plan your practice sessions for when your dog is relatively calm.
4. Use your verbal sit command as well as your hand motion, as learned in Lesson 2.  
**Important:** Keep your voice low and calm. This may require diligence and practice on your part, especially if you're coming home after being gone all day and are used to greeting your dog with excitement and enthusiasm. Remember: the goal is to control

your dog's excitement so that he's less likely to jump up on you. So try not to sound excited to see him. If you're calm, he'll calm down quicker.

5. Give praise and treats when your dog sits as requested. **Tip:** Have a baggy of treats ready outside your door, so you can quickly reward your dog for sitting whenever you come into the house.

6. Don't have your dog sit for long. Ask him to sit, give him the rewards as soon as he does so, and then move away and allow him to follow. Give him a chew toy or do something that takes his focus away from jumping up to greet you.

### **If your dog doesn't do what you want**

If your dog doesn't sit when asked, turn your back on your dog, walk outside and close the door. After about 10 seconds, come back in, approach your dog again and ask him to sit... and again turn your back, walk out and close the door if your dog does not comply. Keep doing this until your dog sits as requested—then immediately reward your dog with praise and several treats for doing as asked.

If you're practicing in other areas and other situations where your dog might jump on you, immediately turn your back on him if he doesn't sit when asked. Don't talk to him. The point is to teach your dog that he'll lose your attention when he jumps up on you or doesn't sit when asked.

**Important:** When your dog jumps up on you, do not attempt to correct this behavior by pushing him away with your hands, or by bringing up your knee to block his jump or force him backwards. This is what many trainers tell people to do, but don't do it. Most dogs will perceive this action as play, and they'll get even more excited and will jump back with greater enthusiasm. This is not the effect you want.

Instead, follow the above instructions for deterring their jumping behavior (turn your back, walk away). Being ignored by you is "punishment" enough for most dogs, and they'll quickly learn to sit as asked, rather than jump up.

### **Bonus Lesson: Getting Your Dog to Go to His Room when Visitors Come**

Sometimes it's easier to avoid a jumping-up situation than try to prevent or correct it. To do this, teach your dog to run to another room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks.

For this lesson you'll need a hollow toy stuffed with peanut butter, cheese or some other food your dog really likes.

1. Pick a designated room where you want your dog to go when the doorbell rings or someone knocks.

2. Have the hollow, food-stuffed toy ready on a shelf or somewhere (other than the

floor) in that room so you can quickly grab it.

3. When your dog is in the house and calm, go to the door and ring the bell and/or knock, then run to the designated room, calling your dog and clapping so he'll run after you.
4. As soon as your dog follows you into the room, give him the food-stuffed toy, leave the room and shut the door (with him still in the room, of course).
5. After 10-20 seconds, go into the room, take the toy away and let your dog out.
6. Wait about 10 minutes, and then repeat Steps 3 through 5.
7. Practice this exercise three times, pausing for several minutes between each session.

This will teach your dog that if he runs to the designated room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks, he'll get a delicious reward.

8. For your fourth practice session, change the procedure a bit. While your dog is still inside the closed room busy with the food-stuffed toy, go ring the doorbell or knock and then talk as if you're greeting friends. After a few seconds, go let your dog out of the room.

9. After your dog has learned to run to the designated room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks, advance the training with a real visitor. After the visitor has been inside for a few minutes, go let your dog out of the room. As your dog approaches the visitor, practice the "no jumping" lesson where your visitor asks your dog to sit as he approaches. Immediately reward his correct response.

**Tip:** Give your dog the food-stuffed toy whenever visitors are in the house, so he'll be more interested in that than jumping up on them.

### **This Week's Homework**

Practice these lessons several times a day. Vary the time of day and location.

### **In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...**

- **Reinforce Lesson 5, Teaching Your Dog to Lie Down.** Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions.

After getting your dog to sit, move your treat-filled hand directly downward from his nose. Say "Rest" in a calm, low voice a split second before you start moving your hand. Be prepared to hold the treat on the ground for a few seconds, or tap the ground to get his attention. If necessary, press gently on his back.

When he lies down, immediately reward your dog with the treat and “Good!” praise.

Also practice saying “Rest” just before your dog lies down on his own. Reward him as usual.

- **Reinforce Lesson 4, Teaching Your Dog to Stay.** Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions. Remember to use the same commands (“Stay,” “Free”) every time, using a low, quiet tone of voice.

Give instant praise and reward for staying as asked by bringing the treat all the way to his mouth so he doesn’t move to get it. If that’s consistently going well, try extending the amount of time for your dog to stay by a few seconds longer than last week before being released.

Later this week, when you think your dog is ready, work on the “distance” element of this lesson by backing up just one or two steps after asking your dog to stay.

As you back up, slowly drop your “stop sign” hand signal, so both your arms are loosely by your side. Stop moving after a couple of short steps and stand very still, looking directly at your dog.

After a couple of seconds, move forward and give your dog the treat. As your dog is eating it, rock back a bit, wait a second, and give the release command (“Free”). Remember to keep your voice low and calm when giving the release command and don’t praise him for getting up.

If your dog starts to get up before you give the release command, immediately move forward to block his forward motion, raising your hand in the stop signal again.

**Important:** Drop your arm and back off as soon as he stops moving forward. If you wait too long and your dog is already up and moving before you can “block” him, just go up to him and use a treat to again lure him back to where he started... and try again.

Remember to remain calm, and avoid repeating the verbal command to stay.

- **Reinforce Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come when Called.** Continue teaching your dog to come when called at various times throughout the week. Practice in various locations, at different times of the day.

Remember the priority is to teach him that coming to you is a wonderful thing that will make him very happy. Don’t use the come command when what you’ll do when he comes is something he won’t like.

If he's responding well when you're 20 feet away, try moving about 30 feet away from your dog before asking him to come.

Resist the temptation to give the come command ("Come! Come! Come!") more than once if your dog doesn't immediately respond. Instead, go to your dog and show him the treat in your hand. Give the verbal command in an enthusiastic voice, turn and move away while clapping. Be sure to praise ("Good!") as soon as he looks at you, and then reinforce generously with treats when he reaches you.

- **Have fun playing with your dog!** Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

**Coming up next week: Lesson 7, Teaching Your Dog to Heel**