

SCIENCE AND COMMON SENSE SAY TO GO POSITIVE!

“Modern behavioral science has proven that dominance and punishment-based techniques employed by traditional 'old-school' dog trainers are less effective and more dangerous than science-based positive training. Our inner moral compasses, meanwhile, tell us that compulsion training just doesn't 'feel right' compared to positive reinforcement, especially when you begin to understand that positive methods actually work better anyway.” ~Victoria Stilwell; positively.com.

So how do you find a positive trainer? Positive trainers worth trusting with your dog's well-being will most likely:

- **Have good people skills.** It is imperative that any good trainer be a great communicator both in terms of listening to your questions and concerns as well teaching you and your dog. They should be very easy to understand and able to pace their teaching style to whatever speed you need in order to produce positive change.
- **Be a great listener.** This is crucial. You can usually tell during your first contact with a trainer – via email, phone or in person – whether he or she is willing to take the time to hear what you have to say. If you're not able to communicate effectively with the trainer, the process will be infinitely more challenging from the start.
- **Use positive methods to address negative behaviors.** Anyone can teach a dog to sit, stay or come using positive reinforcement, but it takes a lot more skill, experience and confidence in positive training techniques to modify unwanted negative behaviors like aggression or separation anxiety using positive training. This is a key identifier which separates hybrid trainers (that use both positive and punishment techniques) from truly great positive trainers.
- **Take a full behavioral history of your dog.** Good trainers want to know everything possible about a dog's background so that they can more quickly and effectively identify root causes and implement a positive training protocol. Any trainer that discounts the importance of a dog's history should be avoided.
- **Provide client references.** In fact, a good trainer will usually actively want you to talk to his or her previous clients. This is because there are so many bad trainers working professionally, it is even more important for the good trainers to convince you that they are in fact solid positive trainers. While it's good to talk to references from the trainer's list, he or she should also encourage you to find and talk to previous clients on your own. Good trainers have nothing to hide.
- **Want to train the entire household.** Consistency is a key to effective positive training, so good trainers will usually strongly suggest that if at all possible, the entire household be available for at least the early training sessions. Doing so ensures that everyone who interacts with the dog will be using a common language and providing a consistent learning experience for the dog(s).
- **Have liability insurance.** This is a business term, but an important thing to confirm before hiring a trainer. Not only does it suggest a higher level of professionalism and legitimacy, it also protects you and the trainer in case anything goes wrong with the dog.
- **Include you in the training.** During the training process, a good trainer will constantly and effectively communicate what he or she is doing, and one of their primary goals will be for you to step in and eventually take over the actual training with your dog.

APS Behavior Helpline

The Animal Protection Society of Durham's Behavior Helpline is also here for you! Our Animal Behavior Manager will be available to return your call or email Tuesdays through Saturdays. We can help with some tips and tricks of the trade, and we can also refer you to a positive trainer or training classes in the area. Call or email anytime – it's free!

Phone: 919-257-8667

Email: behaviorhelp@apsodurham.org.

Please note: If you are experiencing any medical concerns with your new dog including but not limited to: diarrhea, vomiting, excessive urination, runny nose and/or cough, excessive itching, or injury, please contact your personal veterinarian immediately.

Positive Trainers in the Durham Area:

Cheery Dogs

Jane Marshall
cheerydogs.com
(919) 929-9115

Yay Dog!

Clare Reece-Glore
yaydog.com
(919) 724-7090

Robin Karas

wagnroll@nc.rr.com
(919) 225-9231

Training Your Best Friend

Christie Fernandez
trainingyourbestfriend.com
(919) 368-5873

Paws in Training

Angel Wasserman
pawsintraining.com
(919) 896-2859

Family Paws

Jennifer Shryock
familypaws.com
(919) 961-1608

Paw In Hand Dog Training

Barbara Long
www.pawinhanddogtraining.com
(919) 923-5607

Rising Star Dog Training

John Visconti
risingstardogtraining.com
(919) 977-0392

The Dog Lady

Joanne Ometz
www.joannethedoglady.com
919-864-0229

Green Beagle Lodge

Ryan Ford & Angela Curry
<http://greenbeaglelodge.com/training/>
(919) 929-7387

The Confident Dog

Patricia Tirrell
www.confidentdog.com
(919) 824-1624

Raymer Family Dog Training

Dan Raymer
<https://raymerfamilydogtraining.com/>
Raymerfamilydogtraining@gmail.com