

PAWSITIVE TIMES

A newsletter for folks who love their dogs!

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When to TRAIN, When to Manage



Does it make you *crazy* when your dog uses the toilet as an auxiliary water bowl? Or raids the trash when home alone? Are you constantly yelling at your counter-surfing dog? Time to call the dog trainer? Maybe not...

Training involves teaching your dog new behaviors. If you have a dog with a problem behavior, you may choose to train an alternate behavior to replace the less desirable one (if your dog jumps on people in greeting, you would teach him to sit when they approach). *Managing* a problem behavior involves preventing the behavior from happening, but does not actually *change* the behavior (keeping your dog from jumping on people by holding him at a distance on leash so that he *can't* jump on someone). While management is an important part of training (you want to prevent your dog from practicing unwanted behavior *while* you train), there are some behaviors that are so easily managed, why spend your valuable time training? Save your training time for teaching and improving the more important skills (down, stay, come, wait, loose leash walking, leave it, drop it, etc.).

Counter surfer? Food off the counter.
Toilet drinker? Shut the lid or door.
Trash diver? Use a lid or put in cabinet.
TP shredder? Shut the door or place the
roll out of reach. 🐾



PAWSITIVE FIT RELOCATING TO TALBOT COUNTY!

Pawsitive Fit owner and trainer Susan Sarubin is moving and relocating Pawsitive Fit LLC to Talbot County on the eastern shore of Maryland. Along with her husband and three Rhodesian Ridgebacks, Susan will be leaving Baltimore and moving to Easton at the end of July 2010. Pawsitive Fit will begin seeing new clients in Easton/St Michaels/Oxford/Cambridge and surrounding areas in August. As the only Certified Professional Dog Trainer (Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers) on the eastern shore, Susan is hoping to make a positive difference there in the lives of people and their dogs. 🐾



In order to really enjoy a dog, one doesn't merely try to train him to be semi human. The point of it is to open oneself to the possibility of becoming partly a dog.

~ Edward Hoagland ~



Your dog eats **WHAT??**




Most of our dogs would steal a food item from the trash can if given the opportunity. And puppies may occasionally swallow a nonfood item that they are investigating. But what about dogs who regularly eat nonfood items?

The craving and ingestion of nonfood items is called pica, a potentially dangerous condition if not treated and managed properly. If you have a dog with pica, have your Vet check for any possible underlying physical cause. If none is found, the best treatment is avoidance of the items your dog eats. Training your dog to "leave it" and "drop it" will help as well.

Two of my three Rhodesian Ridgebacks are *pica dogs*, and will attempt to eat dirt, grass, paper towels, sticks, dryer sheets, and various other nonfood items. Amber's favorite is socks...she will swallow them whole. Aero's, toilet paper. Both love poop as well (coprophagia, also a form of pica). If I see them heading for a forbidden item, they will usually "leave it" on cue. If I catch them in the act, they will "drop it" fairly reliably.

But what happens if you witness or discover that your dog has eaten a toxic nonfood item or one that could cause internal perforation or intestinal blockage? Call your Vet immediately!

At the Sarubin house, socks are kept off the floor. Used dryer sheets are picked up right away when they fall while removing clothes from the dryer. Poop is scooped immediately. Toilet paper rolls are placed on the toilet tank (we *do* return them to the roller when guests are expected! We just make sure the bathroom door is closed). But being humans, we occasionally slip up.

If you have a dog who has an appetite for the abnormal, speak with your Vet and manage your dog's environment carefully. 

TRAINING TIPS

- Using food to reward your dog is the fastest way to teach new behaviors
- Train when your dog is hungry
- Use training treats that are yummy (if you were hungry, would you work harder for saltines or a slice of pizza?)...try cheese, meatballs, hot dogs, Vienna sausages, chicken
- Your dog will work hard for *teeney weeny bits* of these foods (smaller than a pea!), but if you're worried about weight gain, cut back on food proportionately at mealtime on days when you train
- As an alternative to treats, try toys and play as reward
- Keep training sessions short (5-10 minutes) and have fun!



Pawsitive Fit, LLC
Puppy & Dog Training
Positive Methods for a Happy Best Friend



Pawsitive Fit offers private, in-home instruction in Talbot County for people and their dogs. We are committed to using methods of positive reinforcement and reward, replacing the old-fashioned use of punishment, force and coercion. With individualized training programs tailored to your needs, Pawsitive Fit teaches you to effectively communicate with your dog, encouraging a relationship based on mutual trust and respect, and to have fun together while training.

Whether you need basic Good Manners training for your puppy or dog, or help with a specific behavioral problem, Pawsitive Fit can help. With flexible training options and scheduling times, our services are designed to meet the needs of busy clients who understand the importance of training their best friend.

For more information about our training and services, visit www.pawsitivefit.com

Happy training!

Susan Sarubin, BA, CPDT-KA
Certified Professional Dog Trainer
Behavior Consultant
Pawsitive Fit, LLC

