UPPER SNAKE RIVER VALLEY DOG TRANING CLUB NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2019

CONTACT INFORMATION

President
Marilynne Manguba
208.221.5142
marilynnem@gmail.com

Vice President
Frank Mason
208.524.5284
masofran@icloud.com

Treasurer
Suzanne Belger
208.542.6552 or 208.521.8872
desertmtnmalinois@gmail.com

Secretary
LaDawn Moad
208.206.5424
ladawnjeff@gmail.com

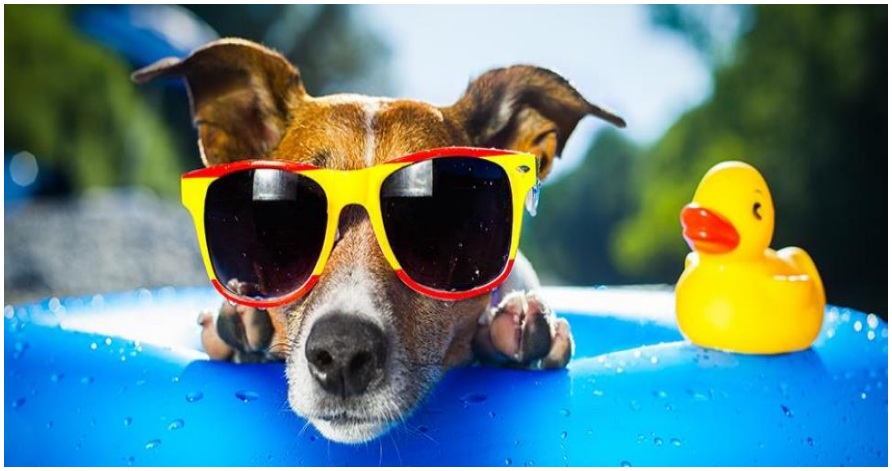
Board Members
Steven Olson (1 year)
208.524.2958
solospec@ida.net

Lucien Frederick (2 year)
208.403.6977
Lucienjr2@msn.com

Nicki Bowden (3 year)
208.709.7914
nedwob88@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor
Nicki Bowden
nedwob88@gmail.com

www.USRVDTC.org



August Meeting – Set up for Trial

Thursday, August 15, 2019 @ 6:00 pm
Tautphaus Park – Lilac Circle
Dinner (Nachos) will be served after setup.

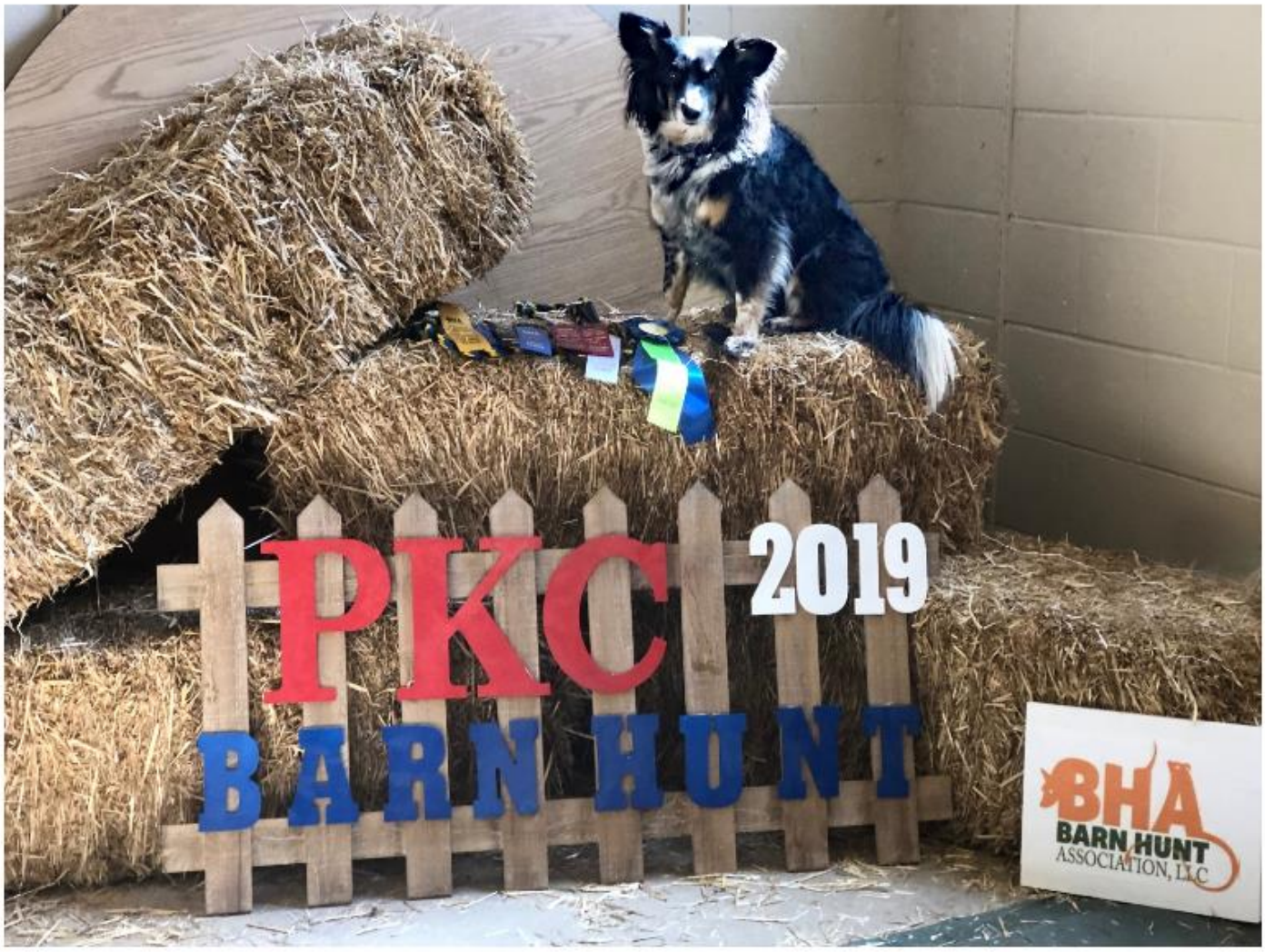
USRVDTC Obedience and Rally Trial

August 16 – 18, 2019
Tautphaus Park Lilac Circle

If you have Brags or any other ideas or information you'd like to see in the newsletter – please send them to me @ nedwob88@gmail.com

Congratulations!

Maryann Igoe & Pari



Pari had a great time at the Barn Hunt Trial hosted by PKC July 19-21. She participated in six Master level trials and qualified six times with two first, two second, one third, and one fourth place finish. She also completed her title for Crazy 8s Silver. She found a total of 41 rats in three days!

Upcoming Opportunities

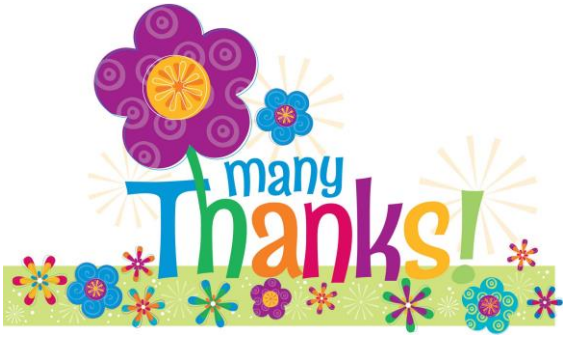
Did you know…Volunteering at our upcoming Obedience and Rally Trials helps you to fulfill some of the requirements to be an Active Club Member and receive free training classes?

There will be many opportunities to volunteer at our upcoming Obedience and Rally Trials, August 16 – 18, 2019.

We will need help with setup on Thursday evening, August 15. This will also be our regular club meeting! We will meet at Lilac Circle in Tautphaus Park @ 6:00 p.m. and after we're all set up…Frank's making Nacho's!!!

There will be a variety of things to do on Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the trial and cleaning up on Sunday afternoon…and if you volunteer, we will provide an amazing lunch!

If you have already contacted me to volunteer…



Otherwise, I will send out a volunteer signup sheet as the trial date gets closer.

Hope to see you there!

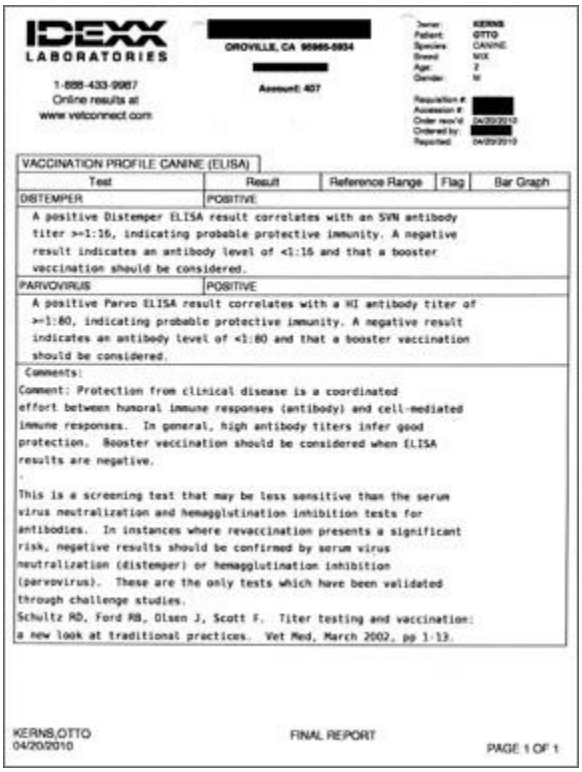
Whole Dog Journal

Beware of Over-Vaccinating Your Dog

How often do dogs need shots? Educate yourself on current canine vaccination practices to avoid over-vaccinating your dog.

By **Lisa Rodier**

Published: July 13, 2010**Updated:**June 20, 2019



IDEXX LABORATORIES

[redacted]
OROVILLE, CA 95965-5934

1-888-433-9987
Online results at
www.vetconnect.com

Account: 407

Owner: KERNS
Patient: OTTO
Species: CANINE
Breed: WIX
Age: 2
Gender: M

Requisition #: [redacted]
Accession #:
Order rec'd: 04/20/2010
Ordered by: [redacted]
Reported: 04/20/2010

VACCINATION PROFILE CANINE (ELISA)

Test	Result	Reference Range	Flag	Bar Graph
DISTEMPER	POSITIVE			
A positive Distemper ELISA result correlates with an SVN antibody titer >=1:16, indicating probable protective immunity. A negative result indicates an antibody level of <1:16 and that a booster vaccination should be considered.				
PARVOVIRUS	POSITIVE			
A positive Parvo ELISA result correlates with a HI antibody titer of >=1:80, indicating probable protective immunity. A negative result indicates an antibody level of <1:80 and that a booster vaccination should be considered.				

Comments:
Comment: Protection from clinical disease is a coordinated effort between humoral immune responses (antibody) and cell-mediated immune responses. In general, high antibody titers infer good protection. Booster vaccination should be considered when ELISA results are negative.

This is a screening test that may be less sensitive than the serum virus neutralization and hemagglutination inhibition tests for antibodies. In instances where revaccination presents a significant risk, negative results should be confirmed by serum virus neutralization (distemper) or hemagglutination inhibition (parvovirus). These are the only tests which have been validated through challenge studies.
Schultz RD, Ford RB, Olsen J, Scott F. Titer testing and vaccination: a new look at traditional practices. Vet Med, March 2002, pg 1-13.

KERNS,OTTO
04/20/2010

FINAL REPORT

PAGE 1 OF 1

VACCINATING YOUR DOG: OVERVIEW

1. Keep accurate records of your dog's vaccination and titer history.

2. Arm yourself with accurate, credibly sourced information when having a discussion with your veterinarian about vaccine protocols.

3. Consider using antibody titer tests to accurately detemine whether your dog needs to be re-vaccinated.

4. Commit to taking your dog to your veterinarian for annual checkups; consider twice-annual visits for dogs seven years of age and older.

Should you vaccinate your dog? Should your dog receive all the recommended vaccines at once? How important are common shots, like the DHPP vaccine, or rabies vaccine? Over-vaccinating dogs is a definite problem in the veterinary world, but immunizing your pet is nonetheless a necessary part of having one.

You check your mailbox and there it is: a reminder postcard from your dog's veterinarian. If you're like many of us dog owners, you groan and toss the card aside.

If you've not yet found an enlightened, up-to-date veterinarian, the postcard is likely to say, "It's time for your dog's annual vaccinations! Call us today for an appointment!"

We hope, however, that you've done your homework and found a veterinary practice whose postcards say something more like, "It's time for your dog's wellness examination! Call us today for an appointment!"

What's the difference? In 2003, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) revised its vaccination guidelines, recommending that vets vaccinate adult dogs only every three years – not annually. Many enlightened veterinarians changed their canine healthcare protocols to reflect the guidelines, and now suggest annual wellness examinations with vaccinations only every three years.

In WDJ's opinion (and that of the experts we consult), annual vaccination for most canine diseases is unnecessary and potentially harmful. Dog owners should avoid employing those old-fashioned veterinarians who recommend annual vaccines. Owners should also avoid those veterinary service providers who provide inexpensive vaccines and other routine care without the benefit of a relationship with you and your dog beyond a brief transaction in a parking

lot or pet supply store. While the financial cost of vaccine clinics may be appealing, the fact is, your dog's health may pay the price of unnecessary or inappropriate vaccines.

Vaccines for Dogs: The Basics

Core vaccines protect animals from severe, life-threatening diseases that have global distribution. According to the AAHA, core vaccines that every dog should receive initially as a puppy (a series of three vaccines given between 8-16 weeks of age) are:

1. canine distemper (CDV)
2. canine parvovirus 2 (CPV-2)
3. canine adenovirus 2 (CAV)

The core vaccines should be administered one year later, and every three years thereafter, unless antibody titer test results indicate that the dog possesses antibody levels that have been determined to be protective. (For more about titer tests, see
"Dog Vaccination Information".)

The rabies vaccine is also considered a core vaccine, but should be given once at age 12 to 16 weeks (or as late as local law allows), then again one year later, followed by every three years. (Unfortunately, some locales require rabies vaccination more frequently than every three years, so check your local laws.)

Non-core vaccinations should be administered only to dogs whose geographical location, local environment, or lifestyle place them at risk of contracting each of the specific infections. These vaccines are:

– *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (kennel cough) & parainfluenza
– *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Lyme)
– Leptospirosis

Vaccines not recommended, per 2006 AAHA Guidelines are:

– coronavirus (CCV)
– giardia

Note: The above recommendations are per the AAHA. Dr. Dodds no longer recommends the CAV vaccine, and advocates administration ofthe initial rabies vaccine after 20 weeks of age (if allowable by local law).

Be Prepared with Your Dog's Vaccination History

That said, don't think for a minute that you need to take your dog to the vet only every three years. It's imperative that you take your canine companions in for yearly checkups. Rather than throw that postcard in the trash, pick up the phone and call for an appointment. Yearly wellness examinations help our veterinarians develop a good baseline on our dog's health, be better able to take notice of subtle changes in his health over time, and develop a relationship with our dog and us.

While these annual trips to the vet might now be called "wellness checks" rather than "vaccine visits," the odds are good that the topic of vaccines will come up. And despite our good intentions, many of us head in with our dog for his annual exam and feel blindsided as the vet suggests an array of vaccines for our dogs. Often, we nod in agreement, get that "deer in the headlights" look and agree with her recommendations (she is the expert after all), then go home with regrets.

Remember the Scout motto and "Be prepared" as you get ready for your dog's next veterinary appointment. Being prepared means more than remembering to take your dog's leash, collar with ID, treats, and showing up on time, on the right day, with the right dog. How to best prepare for your dog's annual veterinary visit and be ready for a discussion on the most appropriate vaccine strategy for him?

- Bring veterinary records and/or a list with you of your dog's vaccination history; do not assume the veterinary clinic will have all the most recent information, especially if you've changed clinics. Other test dates and results to bring include most recent heartworm test, antibody titer test results, and blood and/or urinalysis test results. Ideally, you'll collect all the data ahead of time and enter into a table so that you have a timeline of the pet's life.

My dogs' veterinarian, Susan Wynn, DVM, recommends creating a table with vaccines/yearly wellness test along the vertical axis, with dates along the top. If visiting a new clinic, chances are they'll want proof that your summary is accurate, so request copies of any previous vet records for your dog's new file.

- Have a clear idea in your mind whether you want/need your dog to receive any vaccinations (and for which diseases), an antibody titer test, or none of the above. If you are unsure, cultivate a good understanding of the vaccines available. And ask your veterinarian if any particular vaccines are warranted due to conditions in the area in which you live.
- Educate yourself using reputable sources so that you can have an intelligent conversation with your veterinarian on the pros and cons of vaccination for your dog; a good place to start are the AAHA Guidelines. Writings and research by Ronald Schultz, PhD, DACVIM, and Jean Dodds, DVM, are also excellent references.

- Know the status of your dog's health, and whether he has any health or behavioral issues that your veterinarian should be aware of.
- Bring a list of your dog's current medications and supplements, including dose, strength, and frequency.
- Have an idea of what the visit will cost, including any tests, to avoid sticker shock or making hasty (bad) decisions based solely on price. Call ahead.
- Be prepared to take your dog and go home if you are uncomfortable with your veterinarian's recommendations. There's no need to get nasty or defensive. We suggest something along the lines of, "I'm not sure I'm comfortable with those recommendations. I'd like to go home and think about them."

If you are going to see a veterinarian who is new to you and your dog, consider making an appointment with the veterinarian, without your dog, to discuss her philosophy toward vaccinations and antibody titer tests.

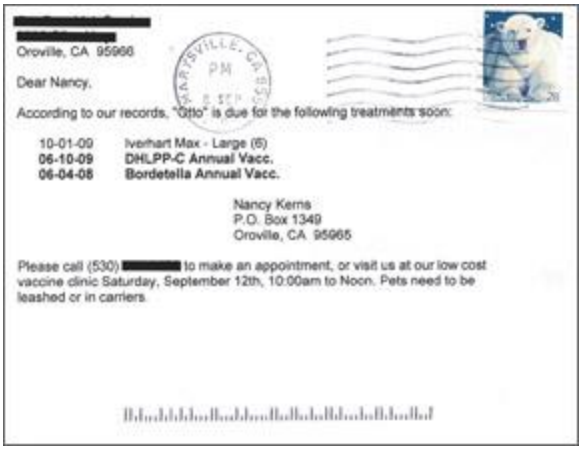
Educate Yourself About Vaccines

Michelle Kitzrow, of Sugar Hill, Georgia, had a change in thinking regarding vaccine protocols after hearing immunology expert Dr. Schultz speak on the topic (see "Vaccinations 101," WDJ August 2008). Armed with a new understanding of vaccine protocols, Kitzrow took her then-four-year-old Bouvier, Casey, in to see her longtime veterinarian for Casey's annual exam.

She admits that it "wasn't very easy" to convince her veterinarian that, in lieu of vaccinations, Casey should receive an antibody titer test to determine whether she had what vaccination experts regard as a "protective level" of circulating antibodies from past vaccinations. But in the end, Kitzrow's veterinarian relented, and agreed to take and send a blood sample off to a lab for the titer test.

Kitzrow believes that it was the relationship she already had established with Casey's veterinarian, along with a new and accurate understanding of vaccines, that helped her veterinarian to support her decision. "He knows that I bring in my dogs regularly for veterinary care, and he trusts me to do the right thing. He also appreciated that I had taken the time to educate myself about vaccine protocols and titers."

An acquaintance of mine, Diane (name changed at her request), had a bit harder time at the annual exam convincing her veterinarian to check her dog's antibody titers instead of reflexively vaccinating – despite an 18-year relationship with her dogs' veterinary clinic and the fact that she takes in her dogs twice a year for checkups. Diane's 16-month-old Bouvier had received a puppy vaccine series, with the final boosters given after she was 16 weeks of age. The series included distemper, hepatitis (adenovirus), parvovirus, parainfluenza (shorthand for this combination of four vaccinations is DHPP), rabies, Leptospirosis, and Bordetella.


[redacted]
Oroville, CA 95966

Dear Nancy,

According to our records, "Otto" is due for the following treatments soon:

10-01-09	Iverhart Max - Large (6)
06-10-09	DHLPP-C Annual Vacc.
06-04-08	Bordetella Annual Vacc.

Nancy Kerns
P.O. Box 1349
Oroville, CA 95965

Please call (530) [redacted] to make an appointment, or visit us at our low cost vaccine clinic Saturday, September 12th, 10:00am to Noon. Pets need to be leashed or in carriers.

"At my dog's most recent vet checkup, I requested that only the rabies vaccine be given. I asked that titers be checked for distemper and parvovirus, and I requested a SNAP 4Dx test, which checks for heartworm disease, as well as the most prevalent tick-borne diseases: ehrlichiosis, Lyme disease, and anaplasmosis.

"I declined the combo, 'all-in-one' vaccine for distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, and parainfluenza, as well as the Leptospirosis and Bordetella vaccines. I did not want all of those vaccines given at the same time and hoped that the titer results would show adequate immunity. I was adamant that my dog receive only the rabies vaccine at that time. The vet marked 'refused' on my dog's chart next to the other vaccines she wanted my dog to receive that day."

Diane understands that Lepto and Bordetella need to be given at least yearly to be effective, but has made the decision not to re-vaccinate her dog for those diseases at this time and understands the risk. Dr. Wynn notes that while we as clients might consider a notation of "refused" on our dog's chart to be judgmental on the veterinarian's part, the reason that the vet must note in the file that the client declined vaccination is to limit liability in case the animal is infected with that disease and subsequently blames the vet. (Dr. Wynn assures me that this has happened.)

"In this particular situation, it turns out that my decision to decline all of the 'recommended' vaccines, except for the rabies booster, was a good choice as the SNAP 4Dx (checked in-house afterward) indicated that my dog has Lyme disease. A follow-up Lyme Quantitative C6 Antibody Test confirmed an active Lyme disease infection, which means that her immune system was already compromised at the time of the exam. The distemper and parvo vaccine titers showed adequate immunologic response, indicating that my dog was still protected against these diseases, most likely from her previous round of vaccinations."

In fact, vaccinating a dog who has an active Lyme infection might have been harmful. "It is never wise to vaccinate a dog whose immune system is preoccupied with something else," asserts internal medicine specialist Nancy Kay, DVM, DACVIM, author of Speaking for Spot: Be the Advocate Your Dog Needs to Live a Happy, Healthy, Longer Life. "The vaccine might 'distract' the immune system from the more important task at hand. Also, in theory and for the same reason, the vaccine might not be as likely to create protective immunity."

Similar to Kitzrow, Diane finds that "Although my dogs' veterinarian gets exasperated by the decisions I make that are counter to her recommendations, she knows that I appreciate and respect her knowledge and experience. I always ask for her advice regarding my pets' well-being and do not hesitate to bring my pets to the hospital whenever I have concerns about their health, above and beyond checkups twice a year. She is also aware that I obtain information from a variety of other sources and that I become concerned and wary when there is a real discrepancy or controversy.

"Although she stresses the importance of following her recommendations, she has come to understand that I feel a strong sense of personal responsibility in the decisions made and their effect on the long-term well-being of my pets. If I have serious doubts about a stand that she takes, I will seek a second opinion, elsewhere. On this day, I guess you could say that we agreed to disagree."

Diane is a little saddened that she and the veterinarian were unable to reach common ground, or at least have a more comfortable dialogue, noting, "It's important for me to have a good rapport with the vets who care for my beloved pets. It's important to me that they consider themselves an essential part of a team working for the well-being of the animals. Open communication and teamwork between pet owners and their veterinarians is essential."

How Antibody Titer Tests May Affect Your Decisions

Antigens are any substance that the immune system identifies as an invader and responds to by producing a chemical defense: antibodies. When everything is working as it should, your dog's immune system will recognize disease antigens that were introduced to his system via a vaccine (weakened or killed) or by natural exposure to the antigen that causes the disease (viral or bacterial).

A "titer" is a measurement of how much antibody to a certain antigen is circulating in the blood at that moment. The result is usually expressed in a ratio. A positive titer test result is strongly correlated with a good antibody response to either a recent infection or vaccination. A dog who has received "core" vaccines and who displays a positive antibody titer test result should be considered protected from the diseases for which he was vaccinated (meaning, he doesn't need vaccines at that time). See WDJ blog entry, "Vaccine Titer Tests," for more insight.

Your dog must undergo a blood draw in order to have an antibody titer test. Labs such as Antech, IDEXX, and most veterinary college laboratories offer these tests. Antibody titer testing is typically run for parvovirus and distemper, since the dog's antibody response to these two antigens is highly predictive as to the dog's immunologic competence in dealing with any other antigen to which he has been exposed.

Rarely, there are exceptions. When an antibody titer test is negative, the owner and veterinarian should consider revaccinating and then testing the titers again. It may turn out that the animal simply needed another exposure to the

antigen in order to stimulate a stronger immune response. Or, it may develop that the dog lacks the ability to respond normally to vaccines, that is, by mounting a proper immune response. In this case, the owner and veterinarian have gained very valuable information about the dog's compromised immune status – information they never would have gained by simply vaccinating and assuming the dog was "protected," as is usually the case with healthy dogs.

Dr. Kay comments, "There are several reasons I can think of why a vet might be loathe to run titers, but of these, I consider only a couple of them to be 'honorable.'" Two examples she gives are:

- Some veterinarians question the accuracy of titers in terms of accurately assessing immunity.
- If a dog is truly at a high risk of infectious disease, revaccination might be a safer bet than relying on the results of an antibody titer test. She adds, "Very few dogs are truly in this situation, such as those who live in the midst of lots of completely unvaccinated dogs and in a lower socioeconomic setting."

When I pressed Dr. Kay on the first point, asking what information "Dr. Doe" would have that trumps information provided by someone such as Dr. Schultz, she replied, "You will get no argument from me on this. I suppose that if Dr. Doe professes that titer tests are not accurate, one could ask to see the data that leads him (or her) to this conclusion."

Although Dr. Wynn adds, "If a distemper or parvo titer is positive, we know that the dog is protected. If it is negative, the dog might be protected, but we have no practical further test to know whether or not it is. Hence, some veterinarians have said the titer isn't accurate to point out that we don't know what a negative titer means." In the case of negative titers, Dr. Schultz recommends revaccination, even though the dog could already be protected.

If You Choose to Vaccinate Your Dog

If you determine that your dog is in need of vaccination, consider the following:

- Ask the veterinarian to perform the health exam and other tests first; you might even wait to vaccinate until those results are in, and schedule a follow-up vaccine visit once you know your dog is in the clear, health-wise.
- Avoid a combination vaccine (five-in-one-type vaccinations) that offers multiple vaccines in only one shot. Note: some veterinary clinics only carry this type of vaccine. We recommend that you look elsewhere for care.
- Do not vaccinate your adult dog more frequently than every three years (unless local conditions suggest a heightened need for Lepto, Bordetella, or Lyme vaccines; these each last a year or less).

- At a minimum, try to schedule the rabies vaccine for a different visit than the other vaccines, if your dog needs them. The rabies vaccine should be administered by itself at a later date, apart from the other three "core" vaccines (distemper, parvo-virus, and adenovirus), and in another part of the dog's body.

If you're considering vaccinating simply for financial reasons (because vaccines cost less than running a titer test) a well-planned vaccine/titer strategy might have you coming out ahead in the long run if you scale back on vaccines and run titers on a strategically planned schedule.

Veterinary medicine today has advanced to the point of acknowledging that there is no single "perfect" vaccine program; vaccine programs must be tailored to the specific needs of each animal. Although there is a tendency to want to treat all dogs the same, the program should be designed for the individual, not the masses. The dog's health, age, environment, activities, lifestyle, and whether he has previously had any adverse vaccine reactions all need to figure in to the equation.

If you encounter a veterinarian who continues to advocate yearly vaccination, schedule a sit-down talk with her, or take your business elsewhere. In Dr. Kay's book, she notes that a "deal breaker" when choosing a veterinarian is when the clinician "vaccinates dogs for everything, every year."

It's Up to You to Make Vaccination Decisions

Don't expect your veterinarian to ask you broadly what you want to do when you take your dog in for an annual exam. Most veterinarians, unless prompted by the client, will assume that you're there for "the usual" and will go ahead and recommend annual vaccinations. It is up to you to educate yourself and advocate for your dog and know what vaccines and tests might benefit him, and to know the laws concerning how frequently the rabies vaccine must be administered.

If you and your veterinarian are not on the same page, try having a rational, objective discussion. Put yourself in her position and try to understand her concerns. Take a step back to be sure that what you propose is reasonable. Keep in mind that taking your dog in regularly for annual checkups will help your veterinarian to develop further trust in you and your intentions. If you've got a good relationship and you're armed with the facts, you just might be able to reach common ground.

Lisa Rodier is a frequent contributor to WDJ. She lives in Alpharetta, Georgia, with her husband and two Bouviers, and volunteers with the American Bouvier Rescue League.

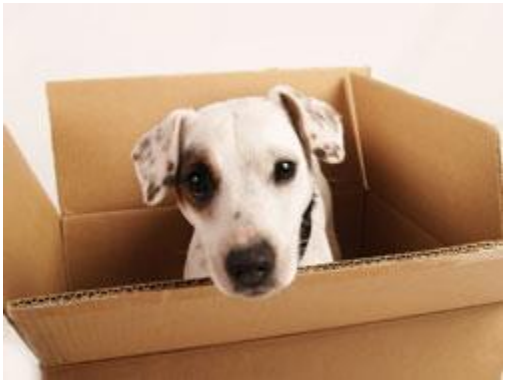
101 Things to Do with a Box

By Karen Pryor on 04/02/2013

Filed in - **Fun & Handy Tricks** - **Karen's Articles**

Originally published: 3/01/2009

This training game is derived from a dolphin research project in which I and others participated, "The creative porpoise: training for novel **behavior**," published in the *Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behavior* in 1969. It has become a favorite with dog trainers. It's especially good for "crossover" dogs with a long history of **correction**-based training, since it encourages mental and physical flexibility and gives the dog courage to try something on its own.



Step one

Take an ordinary cardboard box, any size. Cut the sides down to about three inches, and put the box on the floor. Click the dog for looking at the box. Treat. If the dog goes near or past the box, even by accident, click. Next, after you click, toss the treat near or in the box. If the dog steps toward the box to get the treat, click the step and toss another treat. If he steps into the box, great, click again, even if he is eating his previous treats, and offer him another treat in your hand.

Sometimes you can cook up a lot of "box action" in a hurry this way: click for stepping toward or into the box. Alternately toss the treat in the box and hold the treat out in your hand so the dog has to come back to you. If the dog is reluctant to step into the box, and so doesn't eat that treat, it doesn't matter: he knows he got it. If treats accumulate in the box, fine. When he does step into the box, he'll get a **jackpot**. If you decide to stop the session before that happens, fine. Pick up the treats in the box, and put them away for a later session. Remember, never treat without clicking first, and always click for a reason: for some action of the dog's.

If you need more behavior to click, you can move yourself to different parts of the room so the box is between you and the dog, increasing the likelihood of steps in the direction of the box. Don't call the dog, don't pat the box, don't chat, don't encourage the dog, and don't "help" him. All of that stuff may just make him more suspicious. Click foot movements toward the box, never mind from how far away, and then treat. If you get in five or six good clicks, for moving in the direction or near or past the box, and then the dog "loses interest" and goes away, fine. You can always play "box" again later. In between sessions, the reinforcements you did get in will do their work for you; each little session will make things livelier the next time.

You are, after all, teaching your dog new rules to a new game. If you have already trained your dog by conventional methods, the dog may be respecting the general rule, "Wait to be told what to do." So the first rule of this new game, "Do something on your own, and I will click," is a toughie. In that case, the box game is especially valuable, and the first tiny steps are especially exciting—although they would be invisible to an onlooker, and may right now seem invisible to you.

End the first session with a "click for nothing" and a jackpot consisting of either a handful of treats, or a free grab at the whole bowl. Hmm. That'll get him thinking. The next time that cardboard box comes out, he will be alert to new possibilities. Clicks. Treats. Jackpots.

"That cardboard box makes my person behave strangely, but on the whole, I like this new strangeness. Box? Something I can do, myself? With that box?"

Those are new ideas, but they will come.

If your dog is very suspicious, you may need to do the first exercise over again once, or twice, or several times, until he "believes" something a human might phrase thus: "All that is going on here is that the click sound means my person gives me delicious food. And the box is not a trap, the box is a signal that click and treat time is here, if I can just find out how to make my person click."

Step two

Whether these things occur in the same session or several sessions later, here are some behaviors to click. Click the dog for stepping in the box, for pushing the box, pawing the box, mouthing the box, smelling the box, dragging the box, picking up the box, thumping the box—in short, for anything the dog does with the box.

Remember to click WHILE the behavior is going on, not after the dog stops. As soon as you click, the dog will stop, of course, to get his treat. But because the click marked the behavior, the dog will do that behavior again, or some version of it, to try to get you to click again. You do not lose the behavior by interrupting it with a click.

You may end up in a wild flurry of box-related behavior. GREAT! Your dog is already learning to problem-solve in a creative way. If you get swamped, and can't decide which thing to click, just jackpot and end the session. Now YOU have something to think about between sessions.

On the other hand, you may get a more methodical, slow, careful testing by the dog: the dog carefully repeats just what was clicked before. One paw in the box, say. Fine—but right away YOU need to become flexible about what you click, or you will end up as a matched pair of behavioral bookends. Paw, click. Paw, click. Paw, click. That is not the way to win this game.

So, when the dog begins to offer the behavior the same way, repeatedly, withhold your click. He puts the paw out, you wait. Your behavior has changed; the dog's behavior will change, too. The dog might keep the paw there longer; fine, that's something new to click. He might pull it out; you could click that, once or twice. He might put the other paw in, too—fine, click that. Now he may try something new.

And? Where do we go from here? Well, once your dog has discovered that messing around with the box is apparently the point of this game, you will have enough behavior to select from, so that you can now begin to click only for certain behaviors, behaviors that aim toward a plan. It's as if you have a whole box of Scrabble letters, and you are going to start selecting letters that spell a word. This process is part of "**shaping**."

Step three

Variations and final products: What could you shape from cardboard box behaviors?

Get in the box and stay there

Initial behavior: Dog puts paw in box. Click, toss treats. Then don't click, just wait and see. Maybe you'll get two paws in box. Click. Now get four paws in box. Get dog in box. Options: Sitting or lying in box; staying in box until clicked; staying in box until called, then clicked for coming.

Uses: Put the dog to bed. Put the dog in its crate. Let children amuse themselves and make friends with the dog by clicking the dog for hopping into a box and out again (works with cats, too). One third-grade teacher takes her papillon to school on special events days, in a picnic basket. When the basket is opened, the dog hops out, plays with the children, and then hops back in again.

Behavior: Carry the box

Initial behavior: Dog grabs the edge of the box in its teeth and lifts it off the floor.

Uses: Millions. Carry a box. Carry a basket. Put things away: magazines back on the pile, toys in the toy box. A dog that has learned the generalized or generic rule, "Lifting things in my mouth is reinforceable," can learn many additional skills.

Behavior: Tip the box over onto yourself

I don't know what good this is, but it's not hard to get; it crops up often in the "101 Things to Do with a Box" game. If the dog paws the near edge of the box hard enough, it will flip. My Border terrier, Skookum, discovered that he could tip the living-room wastebasket (wicker, bowl-shaped, empty) over on himself, so that he was hidden inside it. Then he scooted around in there, making the wastebasket move mysteriously across the floor. It was without a doubt the funniest thing any of our dinner guests had ever seen a dog do. Since terriers love being laughed with (but never at), clicks and treats were not necessary to maintain the behavior once he had discovered it—and he learned to wait until he was invited to do it, usually when we had company.