



UPPER SNAKE RIVER VALLEY DOG TRAINING CLUB



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2022

October General Meeting

OCT. 13th 7:00PM at Plum Loco

Upcoming Trials

USRVDTC Agility Trial October 28th, 29th,
30th at Wind River Arena

Sunday Self-Guided Practices

These practices are a great way to keep working on things through the winter. November 6 and 13, December 11 and 18, and January 8, 15, 22 and 20. These practices will be at the 4H building from 12:00 - 2:00.

Pay in advance - \$80

Drop in and pay - \$15/session

CGC Testing

Please come help at CGC testing Oct. 5th at 5:00PM Many hands make light work!

President

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Scent Work Seminar

November 18, 19, & 20 with Natalie Morris & Cameron Ford. Please see the attached PDF in this email for more information.

Obedience Trailer

Please see the attached PDF in this email regarding the new trailer hitch. If you are pulling the obedience trailer you MUST follow the new guidelines.

Board Nominations for 2023

President - Nicki Bowden

Vice President - Richard Brizzee

Secretary - Lacey Moon

Treasurer - Suzanne Belger

3 year board member - Marilynne Manguba

2 year board member - McKayla Summers

Storage Unit Clean Out

October 6, 2022 @ 5:00 pm

Please come if you are able - many hands make light work. We will be going through the units so that we can move out. We will be donating some used equipment to club members that can use it, reorganizing, moving our items, etc.

1380 N Skyline Drive

Idaho Falls, ID 83402

Winter Classes

Classes will begin again on February 7 - Note we are switching to Tuesday night next year. If you are willing to teach a class please let Nicki (nedwob88@gmail.com) or Heike (bayernzinze@aol.com) know. Once we know what classes we can offer we will announce and get them posted online.

You know your Mom is cheep when...

But I wanted to be a Jedi.



Fun Facts and Comics Corner



WHAT KIND OF SICKO GIVES OUT CHOCOLATE?!



NEW TRAINING CHALLENGE OF THE MONTH

This month's training challenge is "leave it."

"Leave It": Training Your Dog to Ignore Items From Dropped Food to Bicycles & More



By [Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT](#)

Nov 22, 2019 |

Imagine you've dropped a chicken [bone](#) on the ground at dinner time? Or perhaps you've spilled some [medication](#). The last thing you want is for your dog to go running toward perceived treats and scarfing them down. Cooked bones are a choking hazard and the pills could be toxic. Making sure your dog understands

that everything on the ground isn't up for grabs could be potentially life-saving. But, how do you teach your dog to leave things be? The "leave it" command is exactly the cue you'll need.

Teaching Your Dog When to "Take It"

The goal of teaching your dog to ignore dropped items is developing automatic behavior. In other words, rather than taking an item from the ground, your dog should leave it be without being asked. You won't always see the hazards first, so you might not say your cue in time. Ideally, your dog should look to you for permission before eating anything off the ground. That's a tall order, particularly for some dogs, but certain training steps can help teach your dog that kind of [self-control](#).

A free-choice exercise is a good way to teach your dog the cue “take it.” This essentially means “you may eat this now.” This is especially important for grabby dogs who snatch treats from your hand. It also allows you to tell your dog when something is okay to eat. For example, if you’re dropping kibble on the floor so your dog can play [hide-and-seek with dinner](#). Free-choice exercises help a dog to make that distinction.

1. Place a [treat](#) in your fist. Let your dog try in any way possible to get the treat out of your hand including pawing, licking, and nosing your hand.
2. As soon as your dog stops trying to get the treat, mark the moment with a [clicker](#), marker word like “yes,” or praise. Then, immediately open your fist, say “take it,” and offer your dog the treat. The point is to show that *not* paying attention to the treat is precisely what earns the treat.
3. After several tries, your dog should start pulling back from your fist or ignoring the treat. Now, wait for a second or two before saying “take it” and offering the treat.
4. Place the treat on your open palm. If your dog tries to get the treat, close your fist around it and wait for your dog to ignore it. Once your dog does ignore it, say “take it”, and offer the treat.

Teaching Your Dog When to “Leave It”

Once your dog is ignoring food in your open palm until the “take it” cue is given, you know they understand the concept of leaving things alone until otherwise instructed. At least for objects in your hand! Now it’s time to take things to the floor.

1. Place a treat on the floor with your hand over it. Let your dog try to get the treat. As soon as your pet stops trying, mark the moment, and [reward](#). However, don’t use the treat on the floor. Although you could offer that treat with the “take it” cue, it’s time for your dog to understand that this isn’t about eventually getting the item. After all, dropped medication will never be up for grabs. Instead, reward your dog with a different treat from your pocket or other hand. Ideally, make the reward treat of [higher value](#) than the floor treat. This helps emphasize that leaving certain things alone leads to the chance for even better things.
2. When your dog is readily leaving the covered treat alone, start removing your hand. But, be ready to cover the treat again if necessary. The goal is for your dog to ignore the uncovered treat, but you want to prevent your dog from getting the food at all costs. When your dog looks away, leans back, or in some way shows disinterest in the uncovered food, mark and reward with a higher value treat from your other hand.
3. Place your dog on a leash and do this same exercise standing up. Except now, use your foot rather than your hand to cover the dropped food. The leash is for preventing your dog from getting any food that you accidentally miss or kick away.
4. If your dog is automatically leaving the food alone when you drop it to the floor, you have taught great impulse control. Now you’re ready to add the “leave it” cue. Because your dog understands the concept, you shouldn’t have to use the cue, but it’s fantastic for other situations too. Before you drop the food, tell your dog to “leave it.” When your dog ignores the food, mark and reward with the higher value treats in your other hand. After many repetitions, your dog should understand the meaning of the cue.

Teaching Your Dog to “Leave It” In Real World Situations

In the real world, there are hazards everywhere, such as a sandwich on the sidewalk or garbage in the park. Now it’s time to up your training and walk your dog past things that need to be ignored.

1. With your dog out of the room, place low value treats in a row along the ground. Space them several feet apart. Now bring your leashed dog into view of the floor treats, say “leave it,” and walk past the row. At each treat, mark and reward your dog with a high value treat for ignoring the floor treat, then walk on to the next. Don’t try to do the whole row at once. If your dog tries to eat the floor treat, quickly cover it with your foot, using the leash to prevent your dog from reaching the treat before you.
2. When your dog is ignoring each treat one at a time, try walking past the entire row after giving the “leave it” cue. Reward a successful run with something extra special like a [game of tug](#) or a chew bone. Show your dog that ignoring things means the chance for something even more amazing.
3. Repeat the above exercises outside on the sidewalk or in the yard. The more locations in which you train, the better your dog will respond no matter where you are.
4. Replace the food on the ground with other objects your dog loves, such as chew toys or tennis balls. This will help your dog generalize the cue from food to anything you don’t want your dog to have.

When your dog is reliable with the cue, no matter what the object, it’s time to try “leave it” with real-world [distractions](#) like a cat or a person riding a bicycle. Be ready with a super high-value reward and keep your dog on leash to prevent your dog from taking off after the distraction. Remember, don’t use the cue if you know your dog won’t respond. You don’t want your dog to practice ignoring you! Instead, go back to training and work that particular distraction into your routine.



By working through the previous steps, your dog will learn to control their impulses and automatically ignore food on the ground. A strong “leave it” command means you decide what is safe for eating, not your dog. And by expanding the cue’s meaning to anything in the environment, you will also be able to control your dog’s behavior and keep your pet safe.

When Your Dog Is a Teenager



Sept. 17, 2022

By Alexandra Horowitz

Dr. Horowitz, a cognitive scientist who studies dogs, is the author of "[The Year of the Puppy: How Dogs Become Themselves](#)," from which this essay is adapted.

The puppy I know — the young sprite we adopted at 8 weeks, whose life I've observed since her birth — is changing again. Quid is 6 months old and just seemed to be settling into our family of three people, two older dogs and a cat. But all at once, she is more sensitive. She has begun to startle at perfectly normal things. A container of laundry soap on the floor prompts ferocious barking (detering the soap not at all). Even after a peaceful introduction to the bottle resting innocently on its side, she remains unconvinced that it is not a threat. My son

lying on his stomach, rhythmically kicking the closet door behind him, causes Quid to run under my chair with fear. The vacuum, which she formerly followed around like a duckling would her mother, suddenly concerns her.

Paired with her sudden phobias, Quid is vigilant and unexpectedly headstrong at home. She monitors the activities of the house with both ears, her right turned back to catch what is happening in the kitchen, her left toward me across the room — and her eyes on the dogs in front of her. Every passing car must be barked at. Loudly. When the cat, her playmate and occasional sleep mate, sidles up to her and starts licking, Quid snaps at her and walks away. Her previous willingness to heed my request to wait at the door before entering or exiting has turned into a new trick: I ask her to "wait," and she runs by me. Many mornings when I call her name, she looks right at me and trots the other way. I can almost hear her slamming her bedroom door behind her.

We thought we adopted a puppy, but what we really had on our hands was a teenager.

Adolescence unites fruit flies, lobsters, zebras and humans — only the duration of adolescence for fruit flies is a few days, whereas in humans, it is somewhere between 10 and 14 years. Quid has entered teendom: thought to be, for dogs, from approximately 6 months old (varying by breed) through their second birthday. Just when we thought we

were done with sensitive periods of development, another one races in — one woefully understudied by researchers and often completely ignored by dog people.

We ignore it to our detriment: There is good reason to pay heed to this period in dogs' lives. As is widely acknowledged in humans, adolescence is a distinct stage of development. No longer a child but far from an adult, the adolescent enters a time of risk-taking, social and sexual experimentation and changeable emotions. No one looks at a 14-year-old boy's oddly distant yet needy behavior, his increasing independence and quarrelsomeness, and wonders what bit him. We know what bit him: He is a teenager.

But with dogs, we call them “puppies,” then move straight to calling them “adults,” neglecting the elaborate stages of development in between. While one might expect adolescent human children to possibly not “come here” with alacrity when called, or not to do the dishes or clean their rooms when asked, an adolescent dog suddenly refusing to come when called disposes people to say, “Oh, you're a bad dog,” rather than, “Oh, you're going through a phase.”

What is called “disobedience” seems to rise during this time: “a passing phase of carer-specific, conflict-like behavior,” as one study gently puts it. Dogs who have learned to sit on command as puppies are less likely to do so as adolescents — [and even then, mostly when a stranger, not their person, asks](#). How perfectly teenage of them. They may be aggressive to other animals, aggressive to people; they destroy things.

While there is a license granted to puppies to err as they grow, to get things wrong now and then, the expectations for their performance grow faster than they do. A primary reason for abandoning dogs in shelters is behavioral — they jump, bite, escape, soil the house. And there is a severe uptick of relinquishments during adolescence, partly because of the uptick of these behaviors; such relinquishments are notable, since euthanization is still the outcome for many returned or unadopted dogs. “Simply being an adolescent can count as a fatal condition,” write Barbara Natterson-Horowitz and Kathryn Bowers, the authors of [“Wildhood,”](#) a book about the vast territory between childhood and adulthood across species.

Puberty can mark the beginning of canine adolescence. Distracted by dogs' newfound fertility, we might miss that it also kicks off a period of rapid growth. They bound from half to nearly all of their final weight from puppyhood to late adolescence. They reach nearly their [final height at the shoulder by 7 months](#). The increase in hormones that leads to a dog's sexual maturation and a growth spurt [also has secondary results](#), including increased sensitivities and less self-control. Adolescence in mammals also oversees a rewiring of the brain — especially in the areas of the cortex that regulate emotions and make judgments. The result is a changed mind and body; along the way, there can be turbulence. “Like waking up in your tent in the wilderness in a gale force 10,” as the trainer Sarah Fisher has described it — both for the pups and for their people.

What happens next can affect their later behavior. Research has connected events and living situations of early adolescent dogs with various personality traits and behaviors as young adults. For instance, being isolated (in a kennel or left alone outdoors) or injured

(through punishment or attack) during this time has been connected to later problems interacting with other dogs or people. Dogs who have been threatened or attacked by an unknown dog are significantly more likely to be fearful or aggressive to dogs as young adults; similarly, being frightened by a person (known or unknown) during adolescence leads to more fear toward strangers.

Adolescence is an opportunity to improve dogs' fate, as well. At least in [research with rats](#), having an enriched environment in adolescence completely undoes the negative effects of the early life stressor of being separated from their mothers. It is not outrageous to think "environmental enrichment" might be just the experience any dog who was raised in a puppy mill or who had another adverse start to life needs.

Adolescent dogs are trying to expand their worlds, to become more adult — hence the balking at their person's ostensible "authority." Adolescent wolves may leave their natal pack at this stage. Notably, their puberty is very much delayed compared to that of dogs, arriving at about 22 months. They may be more equipped, physically and mentally, to skedaddle; still, one wonders if there is a vestigial urge in their domesticated cousins to leave the den.

Pups starting this growth spurt might become sensitive to touch, alternating between shying from and clinging to people; they may start climbing or jumping on people or things. An increase in climbing furniture is not just a challenge to the rules (in homes with rules about such things); it is also a sign of a vestibular system challenging itself. There might be more chewing of objects and licking. All of these acts might read as misbehavior, but in some cases they may actually be a way of managing the situation: chewing, for instance, may help [lower stress hormone levels](#). Adolescent dogs may experiment with their voices, adding new vocalizations — the child testing out what happens when he mumbles or screams. An adolescent wolf howls at a lower pitch than a pup, a kind of analogue to a boy's sudden voice drop.

As at so many times during early life with dogs, patience is due. It is just a phase. Six months into her life, Quid has gone from a blind, deaf newborn, unable to regulate her own body temperature, barely able to lift her giant head and dependent on her mother for everything, to an exceptionally keen, sprightly member of a human household. She can now hear a spoon scraping the last bits of yogurt from the bowl a floor away, sending her racing in to lick the remnants; she plays gymnastically and generously with both the larger dogs and the smaller cat; she leaps neatly up on the sofa and gazes with avidity at our faces. And so as she runs right by me, tail wagging mightily, while I call her name, I smile at her impulse and mischievousness. I'm witnessing her becoming herself.

IMPORTANT MEETING SCHEDULE CHANGES

As approved by the board, here is the schedule for meetings moving forward.

Board Meetings	General Board Meetings
January	February
March	April
May	June
July	August
September	October
November	November

USRV DTC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date 9/15/22

The regular monthly board meeting of the Upper Snake River Valley Dog Training Club was called to order by President, Nicki Bowden, on Tuesday, September 15th at Plum Loco in Idaho Falls.

Previous Board Minutes Read/Dispensed: Motion to accept board minutes as they were printed in the August newsletter.

Motion by: Lacey Moon

Seconded by: Cheryl Loomis

Board Members Present:

Lacey Moon Nicki Bowden Cheryl Loomis Richard Brizzee

Visitors/Members Present:

Phil Moon Duane Loomis

Report of President: Nicki received an email from Nichole Crossley resigning her position on the board at the end of the year. The nominating committee will work to find someone to fulfill the remaining 2 years of the position.

Report of Vice President: None

Report of Secretary: None

Report of Treasurer: Suzanne was not at the meeting so a treasurer report wasn't given. However, Nicki reported that we lost about \$3200 with the obedience/rally trial. Our entries were down and there were extra expenses for the park, porta-potties and one of the judges. It was also brought up that a club debit card would be very practical. There are several things that are purchased online that Suzanne or Nicki have been paying with their credit card and then reimbursed by the club. It would make for cleaner bookkeeping and much easier to pay these with a club card. Cheryl made a motion that the club gets a debit card. Richard seconded the motion and it was passed.

Report of Committees:

Seminar –Scent work seminar is not on the website yet. Nicki will contact Brian about getting it up.

CGC – Nicki will visit with Marilynne to see when/if we can do a CGCU test this year. This will probably October/November.

Unfinished Business:

Storage units – We will be working on cleaning out the storage units on October 6th at 5pm. ALL HANDS ON DECK!

New Business:

Nicki stated that the new scent work trailer is too small and wants to buy a larger one and use the small trailer for tracking. The current trailer is 5x8 and she is looking at a 6x12. It is large enough to store everything for scent work and you can stand up in it to put things away and get things out. The trailer she found that she wants to purchase is at Riverside Trailer in Blackfoot. It is \$6597. Cheryl made a motion that the club spend up to \$7500 for a new scent work trailer. It was seconded by Richard, voted on and passed.

Sunday practices will begin again in November. They will be November 6 & 13, December 11 & 18 and January 8, 15, 22 & 29. You pay \$80 in advance or \$15 at the door to practice at the 4H

building for obedience, rally and some jumpers with weaves. Nicki will have Suzanne reserve the dates with 4H.

Several changes have been suggested by club members to the standing rules. It was discussed to bring them forward at the next club meeting and then vote on them as per regulations. The suggested changes are:

- Increase the CGC testing fee for people who didn't take the obedience class from \$5 to \$10.
- Award end of the year awards only to active members in the club.

Nicki will write up the proposed changes. The board will review the standing rules to see if anything is outdated that needs to be changed and Nicki can add those to the proposed changes.

Motion for Adjournment: Lacey Moon

Seconded by: Richard Brizzee

Time Adjourned: 7:32