

This factsheet covers some of the basic control issues you may have with your new dog. Any new dog requires training, in particular rescue dogs. Unless your rescue dog is a puppy, he may have learnt certain behaviours in his past. Being dogs, they can't explain their behaviour, so we've put together this factsheet to help you to understand your dog, and to re-educate him.

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Factsheet Basic control



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Recall

The following advice can be adapted to your circumstances:

- Ensure that your dog is wearing a collar that cannot slip over his head.
- Ensure that the entire family is using the same command, for example 'come'.
- Portray relaxed body language. Come down to ground level, with open arms and smile.
- Have a happy and excited tone of voice.
- Do not have your dog's lead in your hand when calling him.
- Call him to you and then encourage him to go off on his own again.
- Stay relaxed and patient at all times.
- Always link calling your dog to something good, so he associates it with pleasant experiences.

Another way your dog can learn recall...

- Stand right in front of your dog and call his name, followed by 'come' or 'here'. Lure him gently towards you with a treat.
- Take one step backwards as your dog comes towards you, lure him in close and give him the food.
- Gradually extend the distance over which you can lure him. Ask a friend to hold your dog a few feet away from you. Call him to you as they release him.
- Practise in different rooms in the house and garden before practising on a long extendable lead. When you feel confident, you can let your dog off the lead in a safe place outside.



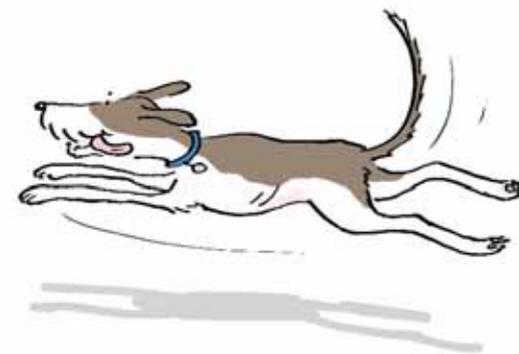
Food

- The amount of food you give your dog depends on each dog's individual requirements.
- It is always advisable to feed your dog at regular times each day. The food should be placed on the floor and picked up after about 5–10 minutes to get into the routine of meal times.
- You could use some of your dog's daily food portions for stimulation. This may include scattering food or stuffing it in *Kongs* or activity balls.
- A nice way to build self control is to ask your dog to sit and wait before receiving his food.
- If you want to change your dog's diet, make the change gradually by adding new food to the old one to prevent tummy upsets.
- Do not fall into the trap of offering special foods to your dog or hand feeding him as you may find that you have to hand feed him for the rest of his life!



Toys and games

- It is a good idea that you keep all your dog's toys in an area that he cannot get to by himself. This will keep the toys interesting and help you keep a little more control over your dog.
- Initiate games with your dog and remember that you can end a game whenever you want to.
- Whenever you feel that a game is getting a little out of control, end it immediately and put the toy away.



Jumping up

Dogs generally jump up for two reasons: to greet or to show excitement. If this behaviour is not discouraged, they will learn that they get a lot of attention when they do this. Try to bear the following in mind:

- Shouting and pushing your dog away can encourage him to continue jumping up.
- All members of the family, and any visitors, should follow the same procedures to stop your dog jumping up.
- There is really only one basic rule to follow here: ignore the dog! No eye contact, no touching and no talking to him. If he persists to jump up, walk away from him and try not to let him follow you.
- Reward your dog for calm behaviour, such as sitting quietly. Do this by varying the reward of food, treats, toys or affection. Your dog should soon learn what he is ignored for and what gets him a reward.
- 'Walkies' time can also get your dog very excited, and he may start to jump up. To stop this, pick up the lead when he is either sitting or standing with all four feet on the ground. When he starts jumping up, put the lead back where it came from and walk away. Try again when he has calmed down.



Pulling on the lead

If you don't do anything about it, pulling on the lead can lead to a lack of control of your dog, a sore back for you and possible lead frustration. This can range from barking to growling when on the lead.

There are many exercises and methods that can help control your dog on the lead. Here is one of them:

Take your dog out on a long lead down a quiet street with as few distractions as possible. If your dog pulls ahead of you, stop and wait to see if your dog comes back to you. If he does not use his own initiative, then call him back to where you are standing. Once your dog is by your side, reward him with praise or a small treat.

- Your dog should learn that when the lead is pulled taut, you go nowhere. When it is loose you move forward.
- The use of a *Halti* or a *Gentle Leader* can help gain control over a pulling dog but always get advice on how to use them first.
- Never use a 'choke chain' or a similar device designed to stop a dog pulling. They can cause long-term medical problems.

For further advice, please call our Behaviour Advice Line on 0905 020 0222
(calls cost 25p per minute)

