



Leadership Exercise

Our Relationship with dogs 20 years ago

Every family has a structure and every member has different responsibilities. Some members are responsible for financial resources, while others are responsible for care taking or managing the household. Even children are responsible for being mannerly, picking up their toys and getting an education.

Not too long ago, dogs were responsible members of the family with important jobs to do for the family. *They guarded our property, herded livestock and helped us hunt.*

Today, dogs are frequently and unknowingly treated like the leader of the group by *being allowed to get up on beds and furniture, eating out of an overflowing food bowl whenever they like, coming and going as they please, having lots of unearned possessions to guard, having subordinates fawn over him/her with constant free petting and being able to demand to be played with, petted, taken out or left alone.* These owners who treat their dogs like kings and queens sometimes wonder why their dog is not obedient.

Establish house rules and enforce them firmly and fairly!

THE DUTIES OF THE LEADER

1. Establish the rule
2. Enforce the rules
3. Maintain social order (leader of the pack chooses who is in the pack, and what authority each does or does not have)

SPECIFIC THINGS THAT SHOW DOGS WHO IS THE LEADER

1. Leaders eat first
2. Leaders go through doorways first
3. ~ stay calm and in control
4. ~ set the pace and the direction (Heeling)
5. ~ do not let their personal space be invaded
6. ~ says when play begins and when it ends
7. ~ do not beg for attention
8. ~ do not offer "free" treats or rewards
9. ~ assume the higher ground (beds, couches, chairs, etc.)
10. ~ never change their direction or step over the dog
11. ~ assign resting spots for other pack members

Please be aware that as the dog's behavior improves you can slowly return his privileges.