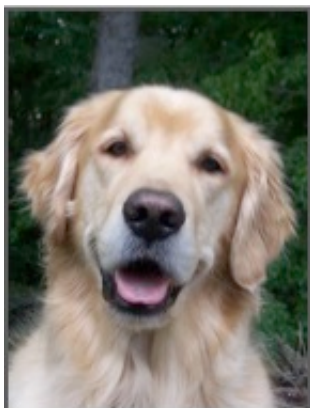


Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

What sort of training methods do you use?

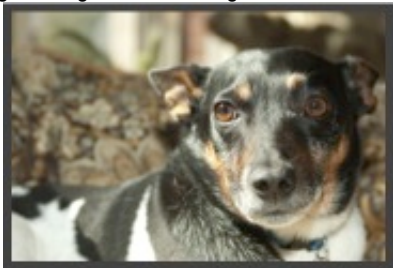


My preference is to use positive reinforcement for new behavior. Having a degree in psychology and fully experienced using all four quadrants of learning theory, I am a balanced instructor able to tailor the training tools and style to what will work best for you and your dog. My philosophy is relationship-based in that you must show leadership (but not dominance) to your dog. You do this by communicating fair training principles and by using mutually satisfying methods. I can fully explain the reasoning behind each choice as we discuss your preferences. The bottom line is, if you and your dog like it and it gets the results you want, I am here to help you use it correctly! [Read what clients think of my style.](#)

If I use food in training, won't my dog always beg?

Your dog will beg if you or others give him food when he is begging! Other behaviors will be as easily reinforced if you use food when initially training new behaviors. Once good behavior is established, food can be replaced by real life rewards such as playtime or attention.

I heard giving a dog people food will make them sick, is this true?



Certain foods should NOT be given to dogs as they can be very harmful, including: alcohol, avocados, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, onions (in large quantities) and chocolate.

Some dogs are sensitive to certain foods such as wheat and beef. These should be avoided if you know your dog is allergic. Sugar causes decay to canine teeth, too, so refrain from giving your dog sweets. Foods that you may use as rewards for good behavior include: any cooked meat, cheese, liver paste, canned cheese, yogurt, peanut butter, most vegetables, and homemade and prepared commercial treats.

Do you use clickers?

Yes and no. Sometimes clickers can be fun, especially when teaching new behaviors and tricks. Other times, my students feel awkward balancing a clicker, the leash and treats, so we just use verbal markers such as "yes!"

Do you use choke chains or prong collars?



Never on puppies. My first preference is to work with all dogs on a regular buckle collar.

If needed, other equipment may be considered.

Usually I will favor using a front-clip harness or a head halter over metal equipment, but if you have a strong preference for certain equipment, or your dog is resistant to a head-halter, I can show you how to use any equipment correctly, in addition to relationship-strengthening and positive-reinforcement methods. [View some of our success stories.](#)

Do you train Pit Bulls?

Yes. All breeds are welcome.

Do you work with aggressive dogs?

Yes, in the client's home where the dog's behavior can be better understood and safely managed. Professional recommendations are made giving all options to the dog owner at the initial consultation. [Click here for more information about private tutoring.](#)

Where do you teach?

I can teach private lessons in your home if you live within a 20-mile radius of I465 and Michigan Road. I teach small group puppy classes at Michigan Road Animal Hospital, 3845 West 96th Street, Indianapolis, 46268. I teach Boarding School at my home in Northwest Indianapolis, and a Sensible K9 Family Dog Class at Wigglebutt Dog House.

What do you think of (this or that) famous dog trainer on TV?



All trainers use methods that work at least at first. TV trainers have great charisma or they wouldn't have an audience.

Make your own observations about the enthusiasm of the people being trained and the dogs being handled. Do they look happy? Does it look like something you'd enjoy doing with your dog? Finally, remember that TV Land is make-believe and behavior problems are not solved in one episode of real-life.

Let me help you with your dog and your issues – I am sure you and your dog will learn a lot and have fun, too. [Contact me for more information.](#)

Do you offer AKC Canine Good Citizen Testing?

Yes, twice a year the public is welcome to join our Sensible Puppy Class members at their AKC STAR Puppy Test events, usually in the spring and fall. The CGC test is free for CGC/ Therapy Dog Package Students. Others are charged a nominal fee of \$12 to cover costs. [Please contact us for dates and to register.](#)

What are your Private Tutoring fees?

Private Lesson (Tutoring) Packages for Basic Training and Behavior Modification (puppies or adult dogs – same family, multiple dogs for the same fee).

- One in-home one-hour consultation: \$100.
Example: one consultation needed to learn basic leash manners or to solve a simple behavioral problem such as chewing on children's toys.

- Follow-up Consultation or Single Training Session: \$90.00.
Example: Sometimes there are sensible solutions to behavior problems that only necessitate a single follow-up training session to give you all the help you need to reach your dog training goals. Schedule one Training Session to ask further questions, get better participation from other family members or to complete the simple training protocols established at the Initial Consultation.

- Save \$15 - Starter Package: three one-hour consultation/training sessions: \$255.
Example: three lessons needed to prepare your dog for a new baby in the home or to achieve success training polite greetings with guests and safety at the front door.
Expires three months after first appointment.

- Save \$35 - Complete Basic Package: five one-hour consultation/training sessions: \$415.
Example: five lessons needed to teach Come, Sit, Down, Stand, Stay, Wait, Leave It or to work with a dog who is fearful of strangers.
Expires five months after first appointment.

- Save \$100 - ten one-hour consultation/training sessions: \$800.
Example: preparation for passing [AKC CGC](#) or [Delta Therapy Dog](#) test.
Includes CGC testing at any regular STAR Puppy test event - ask for dates.
Package expires 1 year after first appointment.

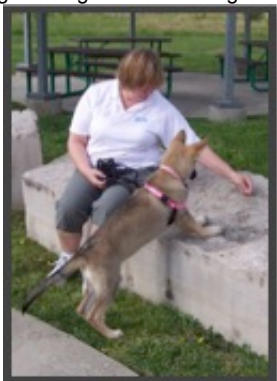
Aggressive Dog Consultation and rehabilitation sessions are handled on a case-by-case basis. Please [contact Catherine](#) for rates and availability.
[Read more about private tutoring.](#)

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How do I sign up for private tutoring?

Please complete our [Behavior History Form](#) and Catherine will contact you for an appointment.

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Please bring your puppy wearing a simple buckle collar and a 4' or 6' nylon or leather leash.

If your puppy needs different equipment as he matures, we will help you make the choice.

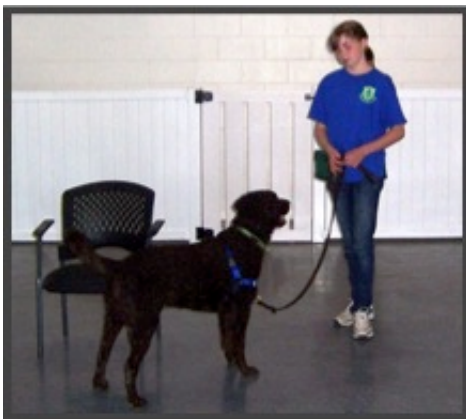
Bring a nylabone or other chew toy for discussion times.

Bring your puppy's dinner along and use it as rewards for good behavior.

Do you use food treats?

We recommend bringing a slightly hungry puppy to class. Just skip his evening meal, package it with a few bits of lunchmeat or cheese to add flavor and plan to feed him for good behavior during class.

What about the risk of infection?



The floors at Michigan Road Animal Hospital are sanitized prior to puppy class beginning. So long as your puppy is in the process of his vaccination series, he will be safe. Veterinarians agree that a greater risk is keeping your puppy at home, without socialization, during these critical weeks.

Follow your veterinarian's recommendations regarding participation. Puppies older than 12 weeks are usually encouraged to attend. See this recommendation from Purdue University Veterinary School:

http://www.vet.purdue.edu/animalbehavior/forms/pc_letter_vacc.pdf

Please do not bring a sick puppy to class. Let us know as soon as possible and we will work with you.

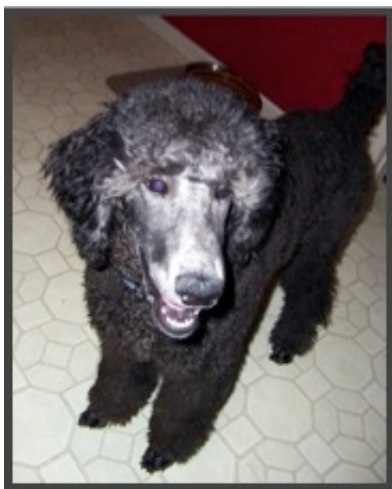
Answers to Common Behavioral Problems

How do I stop my dog from jumping up?

Dogs like to jump up because people pay attention to them when they do. In order to teach your dog to stop jumping up, you must be sure that nothing you are doing is rewarding the annoying behavior! So, ignore your dog, if possible, when he jumps. If that's not possible, have him on leash for greetings so you can prevent the jumping and teach proper behavior.

Next, teach your dog to SIT. Tell him to sit before he reaches you. Then, if he jumps on you, ignore him. Turn your back and fold your arms. When your dog stops jumping and looks at you, say "SIT". If the dog sits, hold his collar while you bend down to pet and pay attention to him. By holding his collar, you can keep your dog's feet on the floor while rewarding him. Further training can help your dog learn to sit while greeting visitors at home. Consider [private tutoring](#) for more assistance.

Why does my dog pull me on-leash?



Dogs pull on leash because they haven't considered there is another way to walk! A Sensible K9 solution is for you to refuse to walk when the leash gets tight. Plant your feet and say nothing. When your dog realizes that you aren't going anywhere, she will eventually look up at you as if to say, "Well?? Are we walking?" At that very moment, hold a tiny treat in your fingers by your leg.

