



# 9 Steps to a Happy Dog & Family Cheat Sheet

## 1. Reward

Motivate your dog to repeat behavior you like by generously giving rewards.

### 5 types of food rewards

1. pea-sized bits of hot dog or cheese
2. Freeze dried liver treats
3. Zukes Mini-bites
4. Veggies
5. Kibble

### 5 types of non-food rewards

1. Going out the front/back door
2. Game of tug
3. Sprinting/Running
4. Throwing the ball
5. Sniffing

### 2 behaviors that you should be rewarding (but probably aren't)

1. Unprompted checking in. Whenever you are in a distracting place and your dog glances at you without your prompting, for even a fragment of a second, you should reward generously.
2. Prompted checking in. Turning attention away from something interesting and onto you is difficult for a dog! Reward it accordingly *before* asking for anything else!

### 3 rules of rewards

1. Must be motivating. Your dog decides what a valuable reward is, not you. Use the reward your dog thinks is valuable at *that particular time*.
2. Retain leverage. If your dog will work for kibble at home, use kibble at home! Save the good stuff like hot dogs for places with higher distractions.
3. Be quick. Get the reward to the dog within 3 seconds of the dog performing the behavior.

## 2. Discourage

Give clear and gentle consequences that discourage your dog from repeating behaviors you don't like.

### 2 ways to discourage behavior

1. 20-30 second Time-Outs
2. Withdrawing desired resource such as attention or food (eg. If dog jumps on you it's likely for attention, so withdraw attention as a consequence to jumping up)

### 3 rules of discouraging behavior

1. Be quick. If the behavior has already stopped, it's already too late.
2. Be consistent. Don't expect your dog to be consistent if you can't be.
3. Don't get emotional. Your dog wants to get it right. Simply show them the consequence of a behavior without being mean, scary, or inflicting pain.

## 3. Physically Exercise

Dogs need more than a backyard. Take your dog on walks and hikes or play games. Use a combination of activities for best results. There is truth to the saying "a tired dog is a good dog."

### 7 ways to physically exercise

1. Walks
2. Off-Leash Hikes
3. Jogs
4. Biking
5. Training games
6. Agility or other dog sports
7. Play dates with specific dogs

## 4. Have rules and stick to them

Set clear boundaries in order to teach your dog that there are appropriate and inappropriate ways to behave. Rules can be arbitrary... just make sure you have some!

### 4 rules you can implement today

1. Sit and wait at door before going out
2. No getting on furniture/bed unless asked
3. Sit and wait for meal to be put down
4. No leash on for walk until calm



## 5. Mentally Stimulate

Mental exercise is just as important as physical. Be sure to spend some time engaging your dog's mind.

### 4 ways to mentally stimulate

1. Interactive Food Toys
2. Training Games and Obstacles
3. Scenting Games
4. Free-shape training (google it)

### How to stuff a Kong

**First:** Always smear something sticky and smelly on the inner walls such as peanut butter, yogurt, or pumpkin.

**Then** stuff with

1. Kibble as part of dog's meal
2. Any dog treats
3. Veggies!

**Optional for expert dogs:** Freeze the Kongs for later use

**Tip:** Don't stuff food too deeply for beginner dogs!

## 6. Take Control

You are in control of what environments you put your dog in. Protect your dog from making poor decisions by limiting exposure to environments that often lead to undesirable behavior

### 3 ways you can take control

1. Crate-train or otherwise restrict access to certain parts of your home when unsupervised
2. Take walks or hikes at times of day when you are least likely to encounter stimuli that your dog may react poorly to
3. Actively interrupt people who engage with your dog in ways that are likely to lead to a poor reaction

## 7. Train

In environments that your dog is able to make good decisions as well as focus and learn, work on building skills your dog can later use for coping in environments they have difficulty with.

### 3 questions to ask yourself when teaching any behavior

1. What is the goal?
2. What is the starting point/baseline?
3. What are the steps I need to take to get from the starting

## 8. Relinquish Control

Be ok with giving up control and allowing your dogs to act like dogs in safe environments that you have chosen. Give them ample opportunities to run, sniff, chase, and explore on their own terms.

### 3 ways that you can relinquish control

1. Off-leash or long leash hikes in safe, designated off-leash areas (may not be appropriate for all dogs. If in doubt, do not attempt without a professional)
2. Allow time on regular leash walks for sniffing and exploring.
3. Allow diggers a space that they are permitted to dig.

### 4 tips to help your dog enjoy crate

1. Give Kongs with meals in crate
2. Make crate most comfortable place for dog by removing alternate sleeping areas
3. Drop treats and food in crate when dog is not looking to encourage future exploration
4. Do not close crate door until dog is making the choice to sleep in crate on his/her own

## 9. Respect Feelings and Emotions

Dogs are honest beings. When they are happy, excited, afraid, or nervous, they always show us in their behavior. Respect those feelings and emotions. Even if your dog's emotion seems over the top or irrational to you, the emotion is very real to the dog. Rather than getting frustrated or angry, help your dog learn to cope in ways that are respectful to the emotions they are showing. Dogs are incapable of seeing the world from your eyes. Do your best to see it from theirs.