

Welcome to My Awesome Dog Fundamentals Class

For the class you will need:

- § 6 foot leash. No flexi-leads.
- § Collar – buckle, martingale, prong, or choke.
- § (No head-halters or harnesses unless your vet has determined your dog has a medical condition and can't wear a collar)
- § 15 to 20 foot long line with a loop at one end and a clasp at the other
- § Shoes that will stay on your feet when you back up quickly
- § A toy for your dog. Start bringing it in week 2.
- § Commitment of at least 15 minutes per day to train your dog

Points to remember:

- § Enforce any and every command that you give.
- § Use your parenting voice when you are giving a command. Tell the dog to do the command - don't ask. You are in charge, not the dog.
- § You are the leader of your pack even if your pack consists of just you and your dog. Your dog wants you to be the leader, if you aren't, they will become confused and try to take over.
- § If your dog isn't paying attention to you, stop saying his name over and over to try to get his attention. Simply say the dog's name and give a command. If he doesn't obey, enforce the command. Next time, when he hears his name, he will respond quicker.
- § Your dog should be wearing a 4' to 6' leash **at all times**. Not the same leash you use for walking your dog...get an inexpensive thin leash that won't catch on furniture...cat leashes work great. **And yes, that means they wear it in the house**. The only time they should not be wearing it is in their crate or, if they have the run of the house, when you are not home, or when you switch leads to take them for a walk. Depending on how fast the dog learns, that leash may be on for months or a year. This is so you can enforce every command that you give your dog.
- § Don't repeat commands. If you do, it becomes just a suggestion and the dog doesn't know when you want him to do it...is it after you say sit 2 times or is it after 4?
- § Praise your dog sincerely and enthusiastically when they do it right.
- § You will not have a completely trained dog in 8 weeks. You will continue working and training your dog for the rest of his life. We train you to train your dog.
- § Always end your training on a good note and give your dog success. If you are not having a good session, put the dog in a sit, praise, chin-touch release and then stop. Go back to training a little while later.
- § **Always** give a chin-touch release after every command. This signals to the dog that he is done with the command. Not giving a chin-touch release will confuse the dog...he won't know if he is supposed to still be doing the last command you

gave him, or if he can just stop doing it on his own. Most dogs, given the choice, will just stop doing it and go about their business.

- § Be consistent in your commands. For example, if you want your dog to stop barking at every person that walks by, then enforce the quiet command every time they bark at people walking by. If you don't, the behavior will be harder to change.
- § Every member of your household that will be working with the dog, must give the command the same way. "Quiet, Koko" and "Koko Quiet" are two different commands to the dog. And what does the dog think "shhhhhhhhhh" is?
- § Daily training is a must. You can work on "stay" as you are brushing your teeth or doing laundry, you can work on "down" while you are preparing or eating dinner. Do random "comes" as you are cleaning your house or washing your car. Heel thru the house when you are going from one room to another. Do commands while you are taking them for their daily walk. Train at least 15 minutes a day every day.
- § Your dog needs exercise. "A tired dog is a good dog". You should try to walk your dog at least a ½ hour in the morning and 45 minutes to an hour each night. In the summer, walk them during the early morning hours or after sunset to avoid the heat.
- § If you have a little dog that is misbehaving, don't pick him up...that reinforces the naughty behavior by bringing the dog up to your alpha level. Make him do some sits and downs and get him re-focused
- § In class, if your dog tries to go under your chair, do not let him do that. Bring him out, put him between your feet and put him in a sit or a down. He will then have to concentrate on the command and not hiding.
- § Almost every dog does well at home. They will sit, down, stay and do whatever you ask them to do in your living room...there is nothing better for them to do, plus they have your undivided attention. When they get to that point in their training, increase your expectations by taking them to pet stores, shopping center parking lots, outside at Starbucks, parks, school yards, etc. and make them do commands when there are all kinds of distractions. The more places you take them to, the more distractions you use, the higher your expectations are, the better your dog will behave.
- § Have fun with your dog when you are training. Training your dog builds an incredible bond between you.