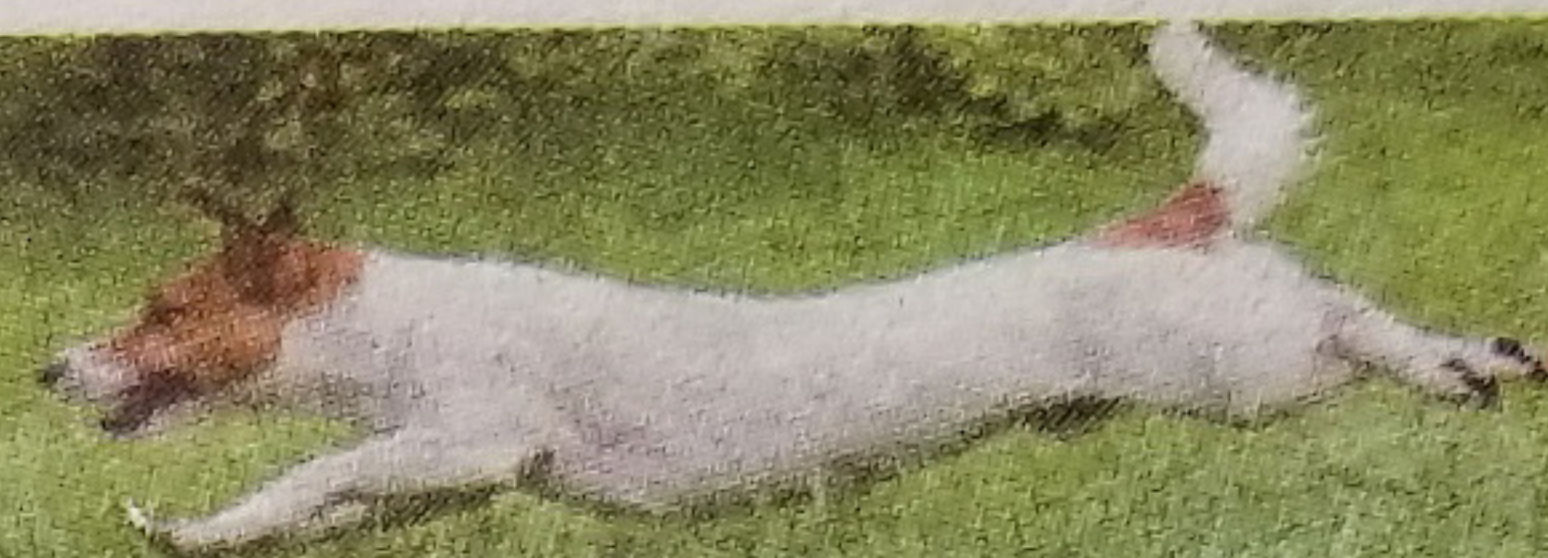


DOG LIFE



Five training mistakes

■ BY HARRY KALAJIAN

Over the years, I have seen several common mistakes that dog owners make when it comes to training. The first of those is simply the lack of motivation.

The second mistake is thinking they have to wait until the dog reaches a certain age before starting training — that's not true. Training can begin as early as three months. The earlier training starts, the fewer behavioral issues there are to deal with.

The third mistake people make is that they try doing the training themselves. Yes, you can, if you know what you are doing.

The fourth mistake is that owners listen to everyone except the trainer when it comes to guidance, thinking there may be a shortcut. Many times, owners don't want to put the time and effort into training. They listen to advice given by their neighbors or people who have trained a few dogs of their own. People think because they have trained a few dogs that they are qualified to give advice.

The fifth mistake is that the wrong training school or the wrong trainer is chosen.

Usually during training sessions with their trainer, the owners tend to practice more and are more motivated. It's just like going to the gym and working with a trainer or coach. When owners

are left on their own they are less motivated, especially if the dog is not cooperating. Owners get frustrated and stop; they try to resume on a later day. Sometimes that works, however, it usually happens that they find no time to practice or find other things more important to do. Training a dog is a commitment; owners should be patient and persistent.

Dog owners want quick gratification with very little work. Those two things don't go together when training a pet. It doesn't happen.

Time, patience, persistence, consistency and repetition dictate outcome.

Never train your dog as a "have to" or a "must do." Training should be a fun time spent with your dog to enable him to fit in with your family and out in society. If you, the owner, for some reason can't do the training, there are different training programs available so that there's less to do and a well behaved, trained dog still to be had.

If you are planning to personally train your dog, work on one command at a time. Move the training area to different locations, once you see that your dog understands the command given. Once each command is mastered, then proceed to another command.

Make sure you are using your training equipment properly, otherwise it will be a useless waste of time. Al-

though the training for any dog is somewhat similar, there are several variables to always consider. Your trainer will point them out to you.

Not all dogs learn with just one method. A variety of techniques/methods must be used to get results.

Never compare your dog's training to the training of others, nor to those that you see on television or in special training. Many of those are either staged or have had countless hours dedicated to the training.

Here is an example: Many moons ago in the TV series "Lassie," where Lassie jumps in the lake to save little Timmy, how many hours did it take?

I know you won't be able to guess correctly. The answer is that it took 1,000 hours to perfect only that scene.

In many instances, several dogs that look alike are used to make a movie or TV show, because one dog can't do it all. The same breed is used, possessing the abilities needed for the part chosen to be played.

In closing, I leave you with a mental note. Put in 20 quality minutes every day, and you will have a great dog. If you do two or three times that 20 quality minutes per day, you will have a great dog that is super well trained.

Something to know

To induce vomiting if your dog ate anything you feel was toxic:

1. Give a piece of bread to eat (it

helps to absorb what was ingested)

2. Prepare one tablespoon of three percent hydrogen peroxide for every 10 pounds of your dog's body weight.

3. Administer it to the dog under the tongue. Tilt the dog's head upwards, so that the fluid is more easily swallowed.

4. It shouldn't take more than 10 minutes for the dog to vomit.

5. If nothing happens, administer one more dosage. Don't give more than two doses.

6. If your dog doesn't vomit, go to the vet ASAP.

If you are not sure whether vomiting can help your pet, you should call the Animal Poison Control center or your vet. The Animal Poison Control Center is (888) 426-4435

Have a woof woof of a month.

Harry Kalajian M.D.T.,
behaviorist, ethologist & psychologist,
has over 32 years of experience
in all aspects of training.
Executive Dog Training Inc.
941-447-8234
executivedogtraining.com