

'Greatest American Dog' Judge Talks Training

DogChannel expert Allan Reznik discusses common dog-training mistakes.

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On the new CBS reality show "Greatest American Dog," now airing at 8 PDT Wednesday nights, one of the 12 dog-and-owner teams gets expelled from the Canine Academy mansion each episode, burying a chance to win the \$250,000 prize. Causes for elimination might include poor training methods used to get a dog to successfully perform in the weekly challenges.

Allan Reznik, one of three judges who will have the final say on who wins the cash prize and title of "Greatest American Dog," focuses on the following most common blunders in dog training:

Allowing a puppy to do anything that you wouldn't allow an adult to do

Dogs need consistency and don't understand the difference between an old pair of tennis shoes that are OK to chew on and an expensive new pair of Guccis that are not. Puppy teeth may not cause the damage that adult teeth do but a dog won't understand why you are suddenly sending him mixed signals.

Repeating the command

Give the command once, firmly, and mean it. If the dog doesn't carry out the command, place him in the desired position (e.g. sit, stay, down), praise him and repeat the exercise.

Using an inappropriate tone of voice

Baby talk, a high-pitched, squeaky tone of voice, or ending the command in a questioning voice won't get your point across. When giving your dog a command, you are not asking whether he will do it. His compliance is expected. So be firm yet gentle and issue the command in a strong, authoritative voice.

Reznik will be on DogChannel's message boards at 10 a.m. PDT on Thursday to talk about the latest episode and field questions from visitors about the show.