

Puppy Class 101: Dalmatians

Follow these simple rules when training your Dalmatian.

All dogs learn their lessons in the present tense. You have to catch him in the act (good or bad) in order to dispense rewards or discipline. You have three to five seconds to connect with him or he will not understand what he did wrong. Thus, timing and consistency are your keys to success in teaching any new behaviors or correcting bad behaviors.

Successful puppy training depends on several important principles:

1. Use simple one-word commands and say them only once. Otherwise, the puppy learns that "come" (or "sit" or "down") is a three- or four-word command. Never tell your dog to come, then correct him for something he did wrong. He will think the correction is for coming to you. (Think like a dog, remember?) Always go to the dog to stop unwanted behavior, but be sure you catch him in the act or the correction will not be understood.
2. Never correct your dog for something he did minutes earlier. Three to five seconds, remember? Never hit or kick your dog or strike him with a newspaper or other object. Such abusive measures will only create fear and confusion in your dog and could provoke aggressive behavior down the road.