



# Wagging Tails

The Newsletter of Vegas Valley Dog Obedience Club

PAGE 1 VOLUME 50, ISSUE 9 SEPTEMBER, 2025

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## How To Trim Dog Nails

By Katrina Eresman  
Reviewed by Teresa Manucy, DVM  
Updated Oct. 30, 2024

Like any pet parent, you want the best for your dog from head to toe. That's why learning how to trim dog nails safely and how often to cut dog nails is an important skill for dog parents. Nail trimming is an essential part of dog grooming, after all.

You can always pay a professional groomer to help you, but with a little time and practice, trimming your dog's nails is a task you can take on yourself.

Here's all you need to know about how to trim dog nails.

### Tools for Trimming Your Dog's Nails

Dog nail trimming is made much

easier with the right tools.

These nail trimming must-haves will prepare you for your pup's next manicure:

- Dog nail clippers or a dog nail grinder
- Styptic powder, such as Miracle Care® Kwik Stop®
- Dog treats

And if a friend or family member can help, that's even better.

### Types of Nail Clippers and Grinders

There are several styles of nail trimmers and grinders. The best dog nail clippers for your dog will depend on their size and breed.

#### Scissor Clippers



Scissor clippers, like the Frisco® nail clippers, are a great option for small dogs. These clippers look like scissors, with notches on the blades to

hold the nail in place.

#### Plier-Style Clippers

Larger dogs need stronger clippers to get through their thick nails, and plier-style clippers like the Millers Forge® nail clipper are up for the task.



These clippers work like scissor clippers but have a heavy-duty spring that gives them

added strength.

#### Guillotine-Style Clippers

With guillotine-style clippers, like this pair by Resco®, the groomer or pet parent places the nail through a hole and a sharp blade pushes up to cut the nail.



These clippers may stay sharp longer and can be easy to use on small dogs.

(See **NAILS** Page 3)

## Famous Dog Quotes

1. Home is where the dog runs to greet you.
2. Be the person your dog thinks you are. — *C.J. Frick*
3. To his dog, every man is Napoleon; hence the constant popularity of dogs. — *Kristan Higgins*
4. If you don't give a dog a job to do it will soon become unemployed.
5. Women and cats will do as they please, and men and dogs should relax and get used to the idea. — *Sigmund Freud*

## Contact Us



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## We are on the Web!



### OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

|                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| President               | Daniele Ledoux-Starzyk |
| Vice President          | Susie Osburn           |
| Treasurer               | Nancy Swords           |
| Corresponding Secretary | Kathy Mondragon        |
| Recording Secretary     | Kristina Klingler      |
| Director                | Marti Siska            |
| Director                | Geri Hunt              |

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

| MONTH     | DATE |
|-----------|------|
| SEPTEMBER | 2    |
| OCTOBER   | 7    |
| NOVEMBER  | 4    |
| DECEMBER  | 2    |
| JANUARY   | 6    |
| FEBRUARY  | 3    |

Board Meeting begins 6:30pm

General Meeting begins 7:00pm

Attendance via Zoom is also available.

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 1600 E. Desert Inn Rd., Suite 240, Las Vegas NV

## Upcoming Events Calendar

**September 4, 2025 VVDOC** Fall Training Class Registration

**September 5-7, 2025** Red Canyons Kennel Club Show and Trials, Utah

**September 11, 2025 VVDOC** Fall Training Classes Begin

**September 12-14, 2025** Great Salt Lake Kennel Club Show & Trials, Utah

**September 20-21, 2025** Prescott AZ Kennel Club Show and Trials

**October 4-5, 2025** Chino Valley Canine Training Club of AZ Trials

**October 11-12, 2025** Bakersfield Obedience Training Club Trials, California

**October 24-26, 2025** Pahrump Valley Obedience Club Trials

**November 14-16, 2025** Poodle Club of Las Vegas Show & Trials

**January 1-4, 2026** Palm Springs Kennel Club Show & Trials, California

**January 8, 2026 VVDOC** Winter Class Registration

**January 10, 2026 VVDOC Awards Dinner**

**January 15, 2026 VVDOC** Winter Class session begins

**January 17-18, 2026** Phoenix Field & Obedience Club Trials, Arizona

**Jan. 29-Feb. 2, 2026** Heart of the Desert Classic Show & Trials, Arizona

**February 6-8, 2026 VVDOC** Trials

**February 27-March 1, 2026** Superstition Kennel Club Show & Trials, Arizona

**March 20, 2026 VVDOC** Trials

**March 21-22, 2026** Silver State Kennel Club Show & Trials

**March 27, 2026 VVDOC** Trials

**March 27-29, 2026** Kern Co. KC & San Luis Obispo KC Show & Trials, California

**March 28-29, 2026** SSKC Trials

**April 2, 2026 VVDOC** Spring Class Registration

**April 9, 2026 VVDOC** Spring Class session begins

**April 24-26, 2026** Apple Valley Kennel Club Show & Trials, California

**Apr 30-May 3, 2026** Beehive Cluster Shows & Trials, Utah

**May 1-3, 2026** Fiesta Dog Shows, Arizona

**May 8-10, 2026** Del Sur KC, California

**May 21-24, 2026** (4 Club Cluster) San Bernardino, California

**June 11-14, 2026** Nut Farm Classic Show & Trials, California

**July 2-6, 2026** AKC National Obedience & Rally Championships, Missouri

**July 10-13, 2026** Truckee Meadows Dog Training Club Trials, Nevada

**July 25-26, 2026** Flagstaff Kennel Club Show & Trials, Arizona

**(NAILS From Page 1)**

However, Amber Karwacki, DVM, a veterinarian with Heart + Paw, in Philadelphia, usually recommends avoiding them since they make it “harder to gauge where you are trimming” and could increase the likelihood of cutting the quick.

The quick is the sensitive part inside a dog's nail that contains blood vessels and nerves.

**Nail Grinder**

A dog nail grinder, like this Dremel® rotary



nail grinder, works by filing down the nail rather than cutting it.

This option is great for dogs with black nails because it makes it easier to avoid hitting the quick.

However, a grinder may not be the best option for dogs that are jumpy or not desensitized to the tool's noise.



“If they jump or move around, [you] have a good chance of grinding the paw or the skin, or getting hair caught in it,” says Angela Sexton, a national certified master groomer (NCMG) and owner of Fuzzy Butts, LLC in Cincinnati.

ton, a national certified master groomer (NCMG) and owner of Fuzzy Butts, LLC in Cincinnati.

**How To Trim Dog Nails, Step by Step**

Once you've secured all the right tools to trim your dog's nails, you're ready to get started.

**1. Touch Your Dog's Paws and Legs Regularly**

You can make nail trimming feel less intrusive by regularly touching and massaging your dog's legs and feet.

“If you have a puppy, we recommend playing with their feet and toes as much as possible, so they don't mind having their paws touched,” Dr. Karwacki says.

**2. Introduce Your Dog to the Nail Clipper or Grinder**

Another way to reduce stress during trimmings is by familiarizing your dog with the tools you're using. “Take a pair of nail clippers and just touch the foot with it for a little while before you actually attempt to clip,” Sexton says.

She also suggests giving your dog plenty of treats when they come into contact with the clippers or grinder, so they develop a positive association.

**3. Pick a Relaxing Space With Good Lighting**

A comfortable, quiet environment can make all the difference when trimming a dog's nails. Dr. Karwacki also recommends a place with good lighting so you can really see what you're doing.

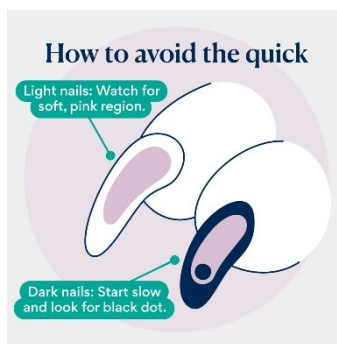
**4. Keep Your Dog in a Natural Position**

One common mistake Sexton sees dog parents doing is lifting the leg up out of its normal range of motion. To avoid discomfort and even potential injury, she suggests keeping the paw close to the surface your dog is resting on.

If possible, an extra pair of helping hands can be useful in keeping your dog calm and still throughout the nail-trimming process.

**5. Look for the Quick**

The quick is a cuticle inside of the dog's nail that, as mentioned, contains blood vessels and nerves. Cutting the quick can be painful for your dog and cause bleeding, so a big part of learning how to trim dog nails is learning how to spot the quick and avoid cutting it.



- In lighter-colored nails, the quick shows up as a soft pink region.

In dogs with black nails, the quick is not as obvious, so you'll want to go slower. Trim a little at a time and look for a black dot in the center of the nail, Sexton advises. Once the dot appears, you'll know you've reached the quick and should stop cutting.

**6. Start Small, Go Slow, and Cut Vertically**

It takes some time and practice to get used to trimming dog nails, so be patient and stay calm. Cut the nail vertically following the nail's angle—at about a 45-degree angle.



Dr. Karwacki says if your dog is particularly anxious, it can help to start by trimming just a few nails per sitting until they get more comfortable with the process.

And don't forget the dewclaws—the small, extra nails located on the inner side of a dog's paws. They need regular trimming just like the other nails do!

**7. Be Generous with Praise and Treats**

The more positive reinforcement you can give your dog during nail trimming, the better. Offer lots of praise and love throughout the process and keep plenty of treats on hand.

“Using a lick mat with peanut butter or a spreadable dog treat can be a great distraction for your dog when trimming their nails,” says Dr. Karwacki.

**How Short To Trim Dog Nails**

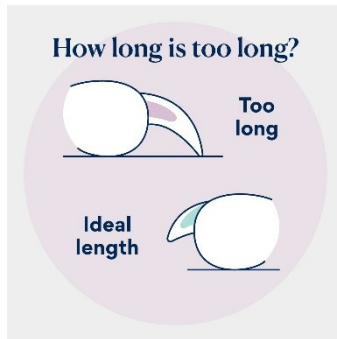
Before you start clipping, you'll want to know how short to trim dog nails. This varies from dog to dog, but generally, you'll want to cut your dog's nails as short as possible without hitting the quick. The quick continues to grow with the nail.

(See **NAILS** Page 4)



**(NAILS from Page 3)**

Dogs that have not had their nails trimmed in a while will have a longer quick, and often won't be able to get their nails trimmed as short as dogs that have had regular grooming.

**What To Do if You Accidentally Cut the Quick**

If you do cut the quick, don't panic.

Sexton recommends keeping styptic powder on hand, which can be applied to the nail to stop the bleeding.

If you don't have styptic powder, Dr. Karwacki says you can use powdered flour on the nail bed, the area underneath the hard part of the nail, where the quick and other sensitive tissues are located.

**How Often To Trim Dog Nails**

Knowing how often to trim dog nails is again going to depend on the individual dog. Generally, Sexton advises doing so about every four weeks, though for some dogs, it will be less frequently needed.

"Dogs that are walked on concrete will file their nails naturally and may not need nail

trims as often," Dr. Karwacki says.

Regular nail trimming is important in preventing pain and injury. Long nails can curl under the paw pads and cause infection and change how your dog stands and walks.

A dog's nails shouldn't grow past the toe pads when they're standing, and the best way to tell if the nails are too long is to listen to your dog walking.

Once you hear the nails start to tap on hard surfaces, it's time for a nail trim, Dr. Karwacki says.

<https://www.petmd.com/dog/general-health/how-to-trim-dog-nails>

**MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM**

# Working Border Collies



**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** — Hercules and Ned have quite the spacious office at West Virginia's busiest airport.

The border collies and their handler make daily patrols along the milelong airfield to ensure birds and other wildlife stay away from planes and keep passengers and crew safe.

Hercules is also the chief ambassador, soaking in affection from passengers inside the terminal while calming some nervously waiting to board a flight at West Virginia International Yeager Airport.

Chris Keyser, the dogs' handler and the airport's wildlife specialist, said preventing a bird from hitting a plane "can make a difference for someone's life."

Collisions between wildlife and planes are common at airports nationwide. With that in mind, Yeager management in 2018 bought Hercules at the recommendation of a wildlife biologist.

Hercules spent the first 18 months of his life training to herd geese and sheep around his birthplace at Charlotte, North Carolina-based Flyaway Geese, which teaches border collies to help businesses

address nuisance wildlife problems.

When Hercules stepped onto Charleston's airfield for the first time, "I held my breath," Flyaway Geese owner Rebecca Gibson said. "But boy, he took hold of the reins. It was his place."

"He's done an amazing job and has just been a great dog for them. We're very proud of him."

Along the way, Hercules became a local celebrity. He has his own Instagram and TikTok accounts and regularly hosts groups of schoolchildren.

Now 8, Hercules has some help. Ned was 2 when he was welcomed into the fold last year from another kennel where he trained to herd goats and geese. Ned has shadowed Hercules, following commands from Keyser and learning safety issues such as not venturing onto the runway.

"Ned's ready to go," Keyser said. "He's picked up on all that. He's doing fantastic, running birds off."

Inside the airport operations center, Hercules is laid back until he's told it's time to work, barking at the door in anticipation. Ned, on the other hand, is always moving. When not outside, he'll bring his blue bouncy ball to anyone willing to play fetch.

Charleston's airport is on top of a mountain and has a menagerie of wildlife, including Canada geese, hawks, ducks, songbirds and bats. After it rains, worms come to the surface and cause an increase in bird activity, Keyser said.

In addition to taking the dogs on their regular rounds, Keyser is in constant contact with the airport tower, which looks for birds on the field or relays reports from airplanes that see wildlife nearby.

"We get plenty of exercise," Keyser said. "You don't gain no weight in this job. It's an all-day job. You're always got your eyes on the field, you've got your ears open listening to the radio."

Border collies are among the most energetic dog breeds. They've been used for decades to shoo Canada geese off golf courses. They've also scared away birds at other airports, military bases, and locks and dams.

The dogs' instincts are to herd, not to kill.

About 19,000 strikes involving planes and wildlife occurred at U.S. airports in 2023, of which 95 percent involved birds, according to a Federal Aviation Administration database. From 1988 to 2023, wildlife collisions in the U.S. killed 76 people and destroyed 126 aircraft.

Perhaps the most famous bird-plane strike occurred in January 2009 when a flight from New York's LaGuardia Airport almost immediately flew into a flock of Canada geese, knocking out both engines. Pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger guided the powerless jet into the frigid Hudson River. All 155 people on board survived the incident, which was captured in the 2016 movie "Sully," starring Tom Hanks.



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
**September 20 is Responsible  
Dog Ownership Day**





# Schedules of Reinforcement: When Should You Reward Your Dog?

By Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT

Updated: Apr 09, 2024



Training your dog with rewards is a great way to teach and maintain behavior. But how often should you give those rewards? You can give your dog a treat every single time they do a behavior right, or you can toss a treat every once in a while. Which is

better? Understanding what's known as "schedules of reinforcement," and the science behind them, can help you to reward your dog most effectively when training.

## What's a 'Schedule of Reinforcement?'

Positive reinforcement dog training uses rewards to reinforce or encourage the behavior you want your dog to perform. Positive reinforcement applies to people, too. Most people are more likely show up to work because they are compensated in some way. If payment stopped, most people wouldn't continue to do their work. But is a paycheck the best motivator? Or do bonuses drive efforts? Some people might prefer to be paid by the task, not by the week.

In a similar way, dogs are more likely to repeat behavior that is rewarded. A reward could be a training treat or the toss of a squeaky ball—whatever your dog finds exciting. There are many ways to provide rewards, and these are known as schedules of reinforcement. That's a technical way of describing different rules for how payment or rewards are dispensed. Let's look at the different schedules and how they apply to your dog.

## Continuous Schedule of Reinforcement

A continuous schedule of reinforcement (CR) rewards every instance of a behavior. For example, you might give your child dessert every time they eat their broccoli.

(See **REINFORCEMENT** Page 7)

## Height

16.5-18 inches

## Weight

20-30 pounds

## Life Expectancy

14-17 years

## AKC Miscellaneous Class

## About the Breed from the AKC

The Norrbottenspets is a small, slightly rectangular spitzdog, well poised, with sinewy and well-developed muscles. Alert with



## Breed of the Month

head carried high, they have a fearless attitude and are extremely agile. They are calm, keen, and attentive, with a kind disposition.

Nobs aren't large dogs (a big male stands a shade below 20 inches) but their tough, sinewy bodies are built to withstand punishing terrain and harsh climates. They are a small-sized hunting dog of Spitz-type, which was thought to be extinct but survived as a farm and hunting dog in the Northern parts of Sweden and Finland. To be able to navigate the rough terrain and climate of the Scandinavian forests and hold large dangerous game, like moose, Norrbottenspets evolved to be extremely agile, rugged, and weatherproof with a fearless attitude, while at the same time kind and affectionate companions at home. They exhibit no extremes in physical characteristics because they must do all things well.

The Norrbottenspets is double-coated with a topcoat that is hard, short, and straight



## Norrbottenspets

and an undercoat that is fine and dense. They are very clever and clean dogs, with no offensive smell. Beyond regular weekly grooming, the very occasional bath will keep them clean and looking their best. Their nails should be trimmed when necessary with a nail clipper or grinder to avoid overgrowth, splitting, and cracking. Ears should be checked regularly to avoid a buildup of wax and debris, which can result in infection. Teeth should be brushed when needed.

(Pronunciation - Nor-bot-ten-spitz)

**(REINFORCEMENT From Page 6)**

With your dog, you could give them a biscuit every time they sit. This is the perfect way to teach new behaviors, because it makes the association between the behavior and the reward really clear.

If you don't reward them every time they sit, your dog might struggle to understand what you expect and when they are performing correctly.

Think about your water taps: they provide CR. When you turn them on, refreshing water comes out. However, if you turn on your tap and nothing happens, you won't keep trying and trying to turn it on. Instead, you'll give up and call the plumber. This isn't the most practical schedule, though. You might not always have a treat on hand, and eating too many treats isn't healthy for your pet.



Once your dog understands what you want, it's time to stop CR. Otherwise, they might only work for you if they see a treat in your hand. CR is also helpful when a dog completes complex behaviors, such as performing a trick (like dropping a ball through a hoop).

In this case, CR helps to maintain the entire "behavior chain." A behavior chain is a combination of two or more behaviors performed in a sequence, where each behavior serves as a cue for the next and the reinforcer comes after the last step in the chain. For example, retrieving a dumbbell involves picking up the dumbbell, bringing

it back, then placing it in the handler's hand. Or performing a freestyle dance move might involve walking backwards, then spinning in a circle before jumping into the handler's arms. Each behavior is originally taught and reinforced individually before they are strung together into a chain.

### Extinction, or No Schedule of Reinforcement

We don't recommend to stop rewarding your dog when they've learned a behavior.

Remember a water tap that doesn't dispense anything when you turn it on. Your tap-turning behavior stopped when the reward stopped flowing. That's known as extinction. And when your dog stops getting rewards, eventually their responses will dry up too. That can be helpful when dealing with problem behaviors like jumping up or begging. But when reinforcement and encouraging certain behaviors is your goal, you want to ensure your dog stays engaged and willing to respond. That's where intermittent rewards come into play.

### Intermittent Schedules of Reinforcement

If you don't reward your dog for every response you receive, you're using an intermittent or partial schedule of reinforcement. Dogs learn more slowly with this type of reward system, but once they have learned a given behavior, it will be less susceptible to extinction. There are four categories of intermittent reinforcement.

### Fixed Ratio

A fixed ratio schedule (FR) provides a reward after a fixed number of responses. Think about a production line. Workers might get paid for every 20 gadgets they build. Completing the assembly of the first 19 gadgets earns them nothing, but number 20 brings payday. With your dog, you might play tug-of-war after every fifth sit and do nothing for sits one through four.

FR is easy to implement, but your dog will quickly learn the routine. They will respond best right before the reward is due, while their performance will drop off right after. So FR might not be the best way to work on improving your dog's behavior. Consider that production line. The workers will work fast to build those gadgets, but in their haste, they might not be doing their best quality work.



### Variable Ratio

A variable ratio schedule (VR) provides a reward after an unpredictable number of responses. This is what gambling is based on (and why it's so addictive). When you use a slot machine, you never know which spin will pay off. So, you keep playing, convinced your money might be right around the corner. You might use a VR to teach your dog to reliably heel by your side on walks. You can feed a treat every 10 steps on average, but sometimes it will be after two steps and sometimes it will be after 15.

But using VR can be tricky. The human brain likes patterns, so you might find yourself using an FR (dispensing rewards after a fixed number of responses) when you thought you were using a VR (dispensing rewards after a variable number of responses). It can help to use a computer to produce a random reward schedule for you. Or include life rewards like a chance to sniff on a walk. Sometimes your dog will get a treat, sometimes a toss of a toy, and  
(See **REINFORCEMENT** Page 8)



**(REINFORCEMENT From Page 7)**

sometimes nothing at all. Because your dog doesn't know what's coming and when, they will consistently work hard and steadily for you.

**Fixed Interval**

With a fixed interval schedule (FI), you only provide a reward if the response occurs after a fixed length of time has passed. It's similar to a child's weekly allowance. The child only gets their money on Sunday evening if they've completed all their chores for the week. Regular feeding times are an FI situation. If you teach your dog to sit by their food bowl before you lower it to the ground, sitting by the food bowl will only be rewarded once the time between meals has passed.

FI is predictable, so like just like FR, your dog can learn the routine. They will work hard right before the reward is due, but performance will drop off at the beginning of the next interval, just like a child who waits to do their chores until Sunday afternoon.

**Variable Interval**

A variable interval schedule (VR) provides a reward only if a response occurs after an unpredictable length of time has passed,



similar to pop quizzes in school. Getting an A on a quiz might mean a gold star from the teacher, but students will never know the length of time between quizzes. They're more likely to stay on top of their homework, just in case. VR can be helpful when training your dog to fetch to your hand. You can vary the length of time you wait before asking for a drop it, so your dog never knows when the reward will come and will hold the item until you ask...

**Putting Reinforcement Schedules Into Practice**

CR is great for teaching new behaviors, but to maintain behavior, intermittent schedules can be more effective. The unpredictable schedules of VR and IR may lead to a steadier response. If you can, be random. If your dog never knows when their human slot machine will pay off, they will respond with enthusiasm each time you ask for the behavior.

Even though interval schedules apply to certain specific behaviors, most of the time you want your dog to hold a behavior, such as a stay, for a given duration instead.

So, although they aren't technically schedules of reinforcement, add duration schedules to your training toolbox too. That involves varying the length of time your dog maintains a behavior before providing a

reward. You can use a fixed duration schedule or a variable one, but the variable will be more effective.

It's also helpful to practice differential reinforcement, which means rewarding only certain responses based on a set criterion. For example, this means only rewarding only the tightest heels or the fastest downs. This is a great way to improve performance and will add variability to your rewards as well. Before you add differential reinforcement, first introduce intermittent reinforcement gradually and purposefully. That will build your dog's confidence and keep them interested in working for you. Then, when you start getting picky about what earns a reward, your dog will already understand that treats don't come every time.

Finally, know your dog. You don't want



them to get frustrated or give up (extinction) due to infrequent rewards, but you also want to prevent boredom as well. While some breeds or individual dogs may happily perform the same behavior 20 times before receiving a treat, other pups or breeds might wander away if you don't frequently pay them for their efforts. High rates of reinforcement keep dogs engaged.

<https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/schedules-of-reinforcement-for-dogs/>

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**September 21-27 is National Dog Week**





# Fun Indoor Games to Play With Your Dog

By Jordan Upmalis

Updated: Nov 26, 2024

Being stuck at home, for any reason, can be a bummer for both you and your dog. But even though you're confined inside, you can still engage in meaningful activities with your dog that can stimulate them mentally and physically. So, the next time you find yourself homebound, don't let it spoil your fun. Try out these games and activities to keep your dog on their toes.

## Hidden Treasure

Dogs have a remarkable sense of smell. Did you know that they have approximately 45 times more scent receptors than humans? What better way to exercise that sense of smell than by making a game that uses it? All you need to do is collect a few small boxes or containers and arrange them upside down. Place a prize, such as a favorite treat, underneath one of them and encourage your dog to start sniffing around. When your dog accurately identifies which container the treat is under, make sure to congratulate them and, of course, reward them with the hidden treasure.

You can also use a snuffle mat to engage your dog's sense of smell and curiosity. There are multiple pockets to hide treats in and different puzzles with adjustable difficulty. Help mentally stimulate your dog and work on their nose work skills!



## Hide-and-Seek

You likely loved this game when you were a kid, so why not enjoy it with your dog?

For this game to be successful, your dog will have to understand basic commands, such as sit, stay, and come. Lead them to a room and ask them to stay, then leave and hide in a different location. When you've found the perfect hiding place, call their name to encourage them to come find you. Once they've figured out where you are, it's time to celebrate their big accomplishment.

## Obedience Training

Speaking of basic commands, an obedience training session is a perfect way to stay occupied. Whether you're working on enhancing your dog's skills for competitions or simply making sure your dog can listen and respond to you in a positive way, an obedience-retrieving dumbbell is a great tool to use for a practice session.

## Play Wild Sits

Now, this is a fun exercise. While your dog is on a leash, rile them up as much as possible — you can run around cheering, jumping up and down — anything to get



your dog as excited as possible. Then, mid-romp, you'll instruct them to sit. This may take some practice, depending on how hyperactive your dog is, but after a few tries, your dog should be able to go from a state of excitement to sitting patiently on command.

## Obstacle Course

This one's easy because you can take advantage of common household objects and design the course to be as simple or diffi-

cult as you want. You could use broken-down boxes for your dog to crawl through, place chairs down for them to navigate through, and even stack books for them to jump over.

You can make an easy DIY dog jump made from household items, or you can also use a set of cones and poles to create your own training and obstacle course.

## Training Platform and Agility System

One way to make sure that your dog is positively occupied inside is by engaging them with a dog training platform and agility system. Many options are adjustable and can be sized to your dog's specifications. Some are even waterproof and washable, so you can use them outside.

## Cardio Twist

Known in the sport of agility as weave poles, this is a training game you can play with your dog, regardless of whether or not you're training for the competition ring. You can set up "poles" using household objects, like chairs, or even friends or family members. Instruct your dog to heel alongside you as you weave between them. You can change your pace from fast to slow, which will encourage your dog to concentrate on following you as you change direction. This is an awesome way to work on coordination, while also getting a cardio workout for both of you.

There's no shortage of meaningful activities you can do with your dog, even when you're cooped up inside. Be sure to make the most of it and spend some quality time bonding with your dog and developing their mental and physical skills.

[Related article: Training Games to Play With Your Dog](#)

## A New Era in Canine Sports Medicine



July 29, 2025

### CHF Launches Groundbreaking Residency Program to Train the Specialists Our Dogs Deserve

Like human athletes, dogs who compete in sports, work in the field, or serve on the

front lines—from agility champions to search-and-rescue heroes, TSA K9s, and herding dogs—face a high risk of injury. In fact, studies show that up to 40% of athletic dogs may experience injuries during their careers. But it's not just working and sporting dogs who benefit from specialized care—aging pets also face mobility challenges that affect their quality of life. Despite this growing need, veterinarians with advanced training in canine sports medicine and rehabilitation remain incredibly rare.

That's about to change.

In 2024, the American Kennel Club (AKC) and the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) took bold action to address this gap,

establishing a first-of-its-kind *Canine Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation Residency Program* with one clear mission: to support a new generation of veterinary specialists to meet the needs of active, athletic, and working dogs.

And now, we're proud to announce—the **program officially launches this July** with the first cohort of residents placed at two outstanding institutions: **Penn Vet (University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine)** and **Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences**.

**Read the full article [HERE](#).**

## Paws & Reflect

### What's the Challenge?

Canine athletes, working dogs, and aging pets are all at risk for injuries—whether it's a torn ligament, muscle strain, or the daily pain of osteoarthritis. Yet the number of veterinary specialists trained in canine sports medicine and rehabilitation remains far too small. As demand for this type of care grows, there's a critical shortage of funding to train the next generation of experts who can help dogs stay active, recover fully, and enjoy a better quality of life.

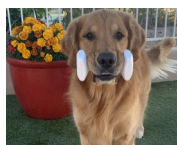
### Need to Know

Injuries in active dogs can be subtle at first: a change in gait, hesitation to jump, or a drop in enthusiasm. If your dog is active in sports, service, or work, or is simply your companion weekend warrior, it's important to find veterinarians trained in sports medicine or rehab. They understand how to detect, treat, and prevent these types of injuries using hands-on therapy, advanced diagnostics and rehabilitation techniques.

### Owner Tip

- **Notice any changes** in how your dog moves, their energy level, strength, or willingness to take part in routine activities.
- **Watch for signs of fatigue or soreness** in your dog after exercise or play that does not improve with rest.
- **Talk to your vet about whether sports medicine and rehab** could help your dog.
- **Support veterinary training programs** like CHF's to ensure more specialists are available nationwide.





## From the Editor

***Do you have a brag? Did you get a new puppy?  
Do you have other dog-related news, photos, articles, humor, or upcoming events to share?  
Do you have a canine product or service you'd like to promote?***  
Send your information to  
***Pam Chadwick at***  
***Goldenz1@centurylink.net***  
***Submission deadline is the 10th of each month***

### Labor Day Activities With Your Dog

#### 1. Host a Dog-Friendly BBQ

Set up a special area with shade, water, and dog-friendly treats. Add a kiddie pool for extra fun!

#### 2. Plan a Picnic in the Park

Pack a picnic basket with dog treats and toys. Choose a dog-friendly park where your pup can run and play.

#### 3. Attend a Dog-Friendly Event

Look for local Labor Day events that welcome dogs. Just be sure your dog is comfortable in crowds.

#### 4. Backyard Movie Night

Create a cozy outdoor theater and watch a movie with your dog. Prepare dog-safe popcorn for a treat!

#### 5. Take a Nature Walk

Enjoy a hike or walk in nature. Choose a trail that's suitable for dogs and bring plenty of water.

#### 6. Organize a Dog Playdate

Invite friends and their dogs over for a playdate. Set up games like fetch or a mini agility course.

Labor Day is a time to celebrate with loved ones, including your dog! Whether you're hosting a BBQ, enjoying a picnic, or having a quiet day at home, these ideas will help you make the most of the holiday with your furry friend.

<https://pupspetclub.com/dog-labor-day-activities/>

## Brags and Member Photos



Nancy Swords "Mystique" cools off after winning her first BOB.



Congratulations Mystique!





# Tidbits

Many of you will remember having had the pleasure of showing or stewarding under AKC Judge John Cox. He left us recently, but his "tidbits" deserve repeating. Below are some of his valuable and timeless tips.

## Today's Random Little Tidbit – **Bullets In The Boat or Winds In The Sails???**

Below is an analogy I would like you to ponder for a bit. In reading only a few of the obedience internet lists which I am on, it stuns me when I read negative comments aimed at the AKC, and our sport in general, from time-to-time. "Constructive" suggestions are good, but there are times when the negative comments go way over the top, IMO. Such shoot-from-the-hip comments (many times without FACTS) are hurting our sport. We need to be more thoughtful of the posts we make, or comments made to the general public. If we are not careful we will be turning off many who may be future participants and our future new friends. As stated so many times before, the future of our sport is in the hands of the novice.

As an analogy, think of our sport as a sailing ship on the high seas, if you will.

With each cannon shot (negative comment) we aim and fire at the hull of our ship may result in sinking the ship. Choose your comments wisely so our ship and crew will sail into the future and not end up at the bottom of a negative sea.

As I was taught in the service (USCG), "Loose lips sink ships!"

Let me suggest installing a longer fuse in the negative cannon, cease fire, and work to "enlist" new "sailors" on our ship. Becoming involved in saving and maintaining our ship is like polishing the ship's brass. It can be work at times, but ever so rewarding when it shines in the sun. It is time for us to concentrate a little more on

saluting our ship and welcoming new "sailors" aboard!

Our ship has been sailing the seas since its launch in 1936. There have been times over the years when she goes back into dry-dock to be updated, but when she returns to the high seas there are always those who love taking shots at her once again, and then run off to board another ship. Keep in mind, our ship is the next to the oldest ship on the high seas, only surpassed by the ship of Conformation. Let's take care of her, treat her with respect, and keep her brass polished and shining in the sun!

**WELCOME Aboard and smooth sailing into the future!**

## ABOUT US



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**Vegas Valley Dog Obedience Club was founded in 1962. We are licensed by the American Kennel Club. Our purpose is to promote responsible dog ownership, humane training methods, and to further the sport of canine Obedience through AKC Obedience & Rally Trials. We offer Training Classes to the public and our members three times each year.**

**Please contact [info@vvdoc.org](mailto:info@vvdoc.org) for more information about our organization.**