

BEFORE

you train your dog

Learn the
HUMAN skills
that impact your
dog's behavior



When humans know better, dogs do better.

OUR DOGS ARE DEPENDING ON US

Living with a dog can be wonderful - but sometimes more challenging than we expected. It's easy to focus on asking our dogs to behave, without fully considering the lives we're asking them to live.

When it feels like our dogs are giving us a hard time, they're often *having* a hard time.



Before we jump to training our dogs, it helps to remember that we're actually holding all the cards. We shape almost every aspect of their world. By understanding who they are and what they need, we can use our influence more mindfully — creating the kind of life we hoped for when we brought them home.

This guide is an intro to the four human skills that have the biggest impact on our dogs' behavior.

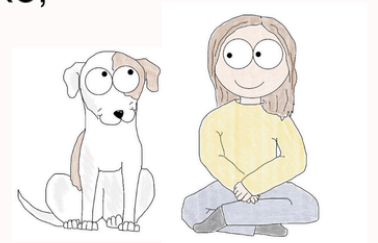
THE HUMAN SKILLS

1 See Your Dog

Why it matters: Each dog is an individual - so being able to see them and accept them for *exactly* who they are (as a thinking feeling being, not just a pet) is the first step to a great relationship.

Try it: Take moments to just watch your dog in different situations. What do they do? Notice what they like, dislike, and where they might need your help.

Ask: How well do I *really* know my dog?



2 Parent Your Dog

Why it matters: It can be tricky for dogs to live in a human world. So, it's up to us to help them feel at ease and to create opportunities for them to just 'be a dog'. Taking the time to fill their cup allows dogs to be more calm, confident, and resilient in their daily life.

Try it: Find a safe outside space where your dog can freely choose their own pace and activity.

Ask: What does my dog need from *me*?



THE HUMAN SKILLS

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Teach Your Crew

Why it matters: Dogs feel more secure when people around them behave in kind and predictable ways. Guiding those who interact with our dog to respect their body, feelings, needs, and space builds trust and safety for everyone.

Try it: Model considerate behavior and fair expectations. Teach your inner circle how to be a voice for your dog and protect their right to say “no”.

Ask: What does my dog *most* need people to understand?



4

Create a Plan

Why it matters: Patterns hold behavior in place way better than commands do. Creating and following clear plans for daily (or tricky) situations helps reduce stress for everyone - your dog, your people... and you!

Try it: Map out your daily routines and activities, then fill in the blank for what *your dog* can be doing at those times. Rinse and repeat.

Ask: Is this plan *fair* and *clear* to my dog?



TAKE THE FIRST STEP

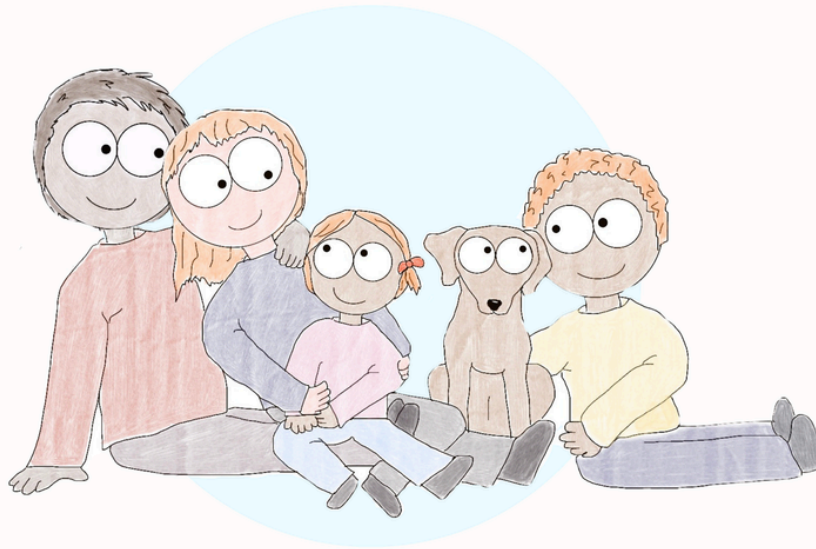
Experiment with each of these skills one at a time
and observe how your dog responds.

Give them space to work.

Notice what shifts — in your dog's behavior
and in the overall feel of your home.

You don't have to do everything at once.

**Small, thoughtful adjustments
can create meaningful change.**



These concepts are rooted in the principles behind
The Dial Method® — a simple system designed
to help humans lead with clarity,
responsibility, and compassion.

Our actions shape our dogs' behavior.

When humans know better, dogs do better.

THE IMPACT

PEOPLE learning first

Training DOGS first

Expectations are realistic and fair



Humans are clear on their responsibility



Humans understand dog body language



Dog's needs are met before teaching



House rules are clear and consistent



The environment is set up for success



Dogs are optimized for learning



Stress is reduced for dog and human



THE CHEAT SHEET

Doing OUR part first not only optimizes our dog's learning...
but the very life we share together.

1

See Your Dog

See your dog for who they truly are:
a thinking, feeling being.
Real understanding starts with paying attention.

2

Parent Your Dog

Be their guide.
Show them the ropes,
set kind boundaries,
and give them the space to just be a dog.

The
DIAL
Method®

Create a Plan

Decide in advance what happens when.
Clear, repeatable patterns create peace in a busy world.

4

Teach Your Crew

Show others how to be kind and respectful to your dog.
Consistency helps dogs feel trust and security.

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