

How to: **BE A GOOD LEADER**



Dogs are pack animals. As such they adhere to dominance hierarchies. Your dog should see YOU as their leader. There are a few simple ways to ensure that you are in charge of your dog and not the other way around.

- Have clear, well-defined rules for your dog. Dogs do not understand “sometimes”. If you decide you do not want to let your dog on the couch, then the dog should NEVER be allowed on the couch. The rules cannot change with your mood.
- Stick to a “nothing comes for free” policy. All resources come through you, the leader. Your dog should have to offer something to get what it wants in return. Make your dog sit for its meals, sit before going outside, sit before going on a walk, etc. This includes offering a sit to get your attention!
- Follow through with commands. If you ask your dog for a behavior, make sure your dog does the behavior or make sure your dog does not get rewarded for ignoring you. For example, if you are taking your dog out for a walk and you ask for a sit at the door and the dog acts like it does not hear you, give your dog a few seconds to decide to listen. If he does not sit, walk away and try again in a few minutes. Do not repeat commands over and over. This just teaches your dog to ignore you.
- Never use force to get the dog to listen to you. This includes pushing down on the dog’s rear end to get him to sit, jerking on the leash to get the dog to stop pulling, etc. Dogs have a very strong opposition reflex; if you start pushing, they will push back!

