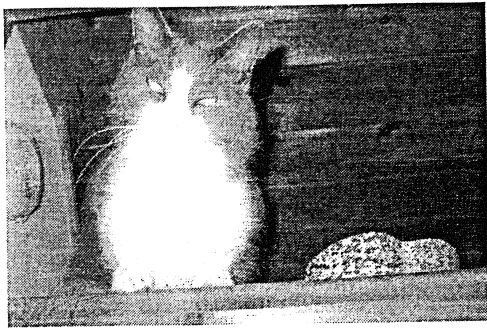


The Truth About Dogs

A Cat's Perspective...



Dogs are different than cats.

Cats rule, dogs drool.

Dogs have masters, cats have staff.

In many ways dogs are almost human.

Dogs need to feel part of a group to be happy.

Just like people and horses, dogs evolved to live in groups.

The group keeps them safe from outside dangers.



The group needs a leader.

The group provides a rich social life.

The litter is a dog's first social group.

A dog's ability to socialize with people starts with the ability to socialize with other dogs.

The law in the United States recognizes how important this period is for dogs, so puppies must remain with the mother dog until they are eight weeks old.

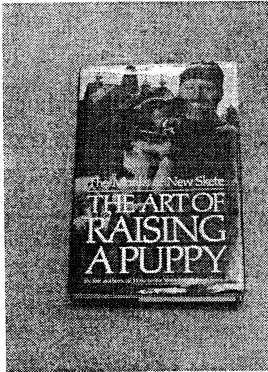


A dog's temperament - its personality - is established in this first group.

Depending on the situation, being bold, painfully shy, or middle-of-the-road, could have a survival advantage.



Trainability and social skills are linked to temperament.



Selecting the right temperament for your household can be key for success.

The Puppy Aptitude Test is included in the book "The Art of Raising A Puppy" from the Monks of New Skete.

It scores factors such as:

- Social attraction.
- Retrieving.
- Restraint.
- Elevation dominance.
- Touch, sound, and sight sensitivity.
- Social dominance.
- Following.

Bold puppies are the first to greet you.

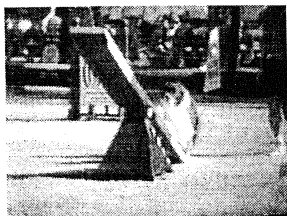
They need a strong leader to set good boundaries to keep them safe.

They are at greater risk of injury.

They can be tough to train.



The bold dog's drive is best channeled into specialty training, like agility, field trials, herding, tracking, and protection.



Without a special job to focus on, they can get into trouble.

They can be aggressive.

They do not make easy pets for most of us.

Shy dogs may need to be taught to enjoy social interaction.

McKeever cringed when he was hugged.

He looked like he was being beaten when he did obedience.

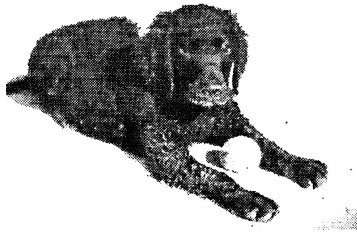
He was very dutiful as long as I was willing to do all the thinking.



He needed other dogs around from which he could take his social cues.

When fearful, he would consider biting.

The puppy that does not stand out from the crowd makes the perfect pet.



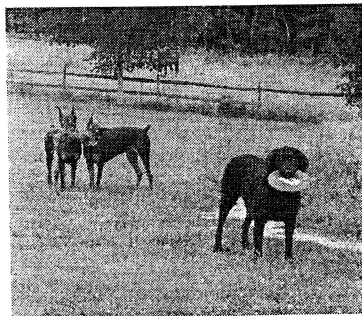
MacGuffin is very flexible.

- He will play top or bottom.
- He is eager to please.
- He is very tolerable.
- He does not try to outsmart me.
- He temperament tested a 3--right in the middle.

Dogs bond with their group through work and play.

Unlike cats, they are team players.

They want instructions.



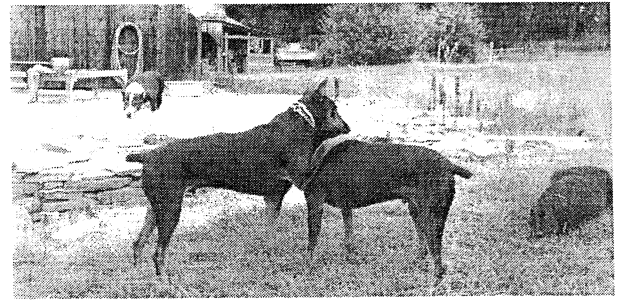
They want a job.

They want their role defined.

Peace and happiness for a dog comes from knowing its place in the group.

Dogs do not like to be equal.

- Morse and Robbie in the middle feel equal, so they have to fight it out.
- MacGuffin on the right is at peace as head dog.
- Josh on the left is happy on the bottom.



Siding with the winner promotes peace, which is our goal.



Greet and feed the dogs in order of rank.

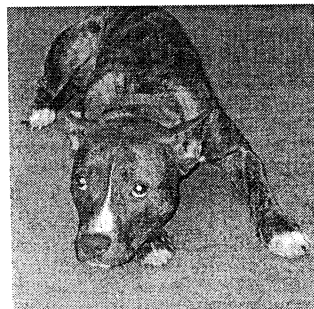
Let the higher ranked dog go first.

Have the top dog sit and the other lie down.

Always put yourself in the role of leader.

Different breeds of dogs have different instinctive behaviors.

Instinctive behaviors are inborn. They are done without thinking. Training can turn instincts on and off.



But a dog will fall back on instinct unless we teach them a better behavior. Pitbulls are instinctively dog aggressive.

Teach your dog - when in doubt, sit.

Dogs need a safe behavior to fall back on beside their instincts.

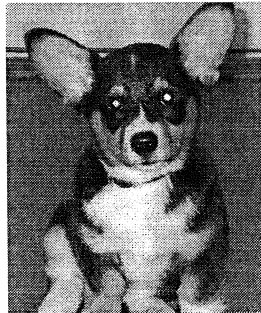
When a dog is sitting, it is not jumping, running, or causing trouble.

Your dog becomes a welcome guest anywhere--even at a beach house.



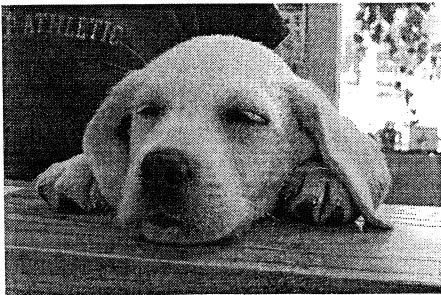
Nothing-in-life-is free.

By linking every good - food, exercise, attention - with sitting, your dog will learn to listen from the start.



Working keeps dogs out of trouble. It puts you comfortably in the leader role.

Remember: The right lessons now will save my life later!



At this age, puppies are sponges, taking in any information we give them.

They are learning physical boundaries of property and people's personal space.

They are learning to feel safe when they are alone.

They are learning to look to us as their leader, who:

1. knows where they are going.
2. will keep them safe.
3. meets their physical needs.

Dogs do not want to hurt their playmates.

When it plays rough or bites, it thinks that is how you want to play.



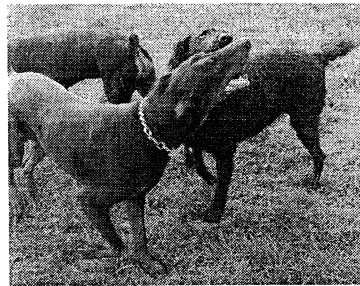
If you try to correct it by pushing, hitting, or running away, it just thinks you like to play rough.

"If you hurt me, I won't play."

You need to let your puppy know it hurt you the way dogs talk to each other.

- Cry out--"Ouch!" (squeal with displeasure!)
- Pout--pull back, freeze, and stop playing

At my house, the game is always over if I am hurt, even if it was my fault.



"I can not bite you when I have a toy in my mouth."

Bernie, a patient of mine, tested this point the day he accidentally suctioned a ball onto his tongue. Bernie proved beyond doubt, a dog can not bite with a ball in his mouth no matter how hard he tries. Since removing the ball for him, he has developed a grudging respect for my



If you do not acknowledge the very bitey puppy unless it is carrying a toy, it learns that not biting is part of a greeting.

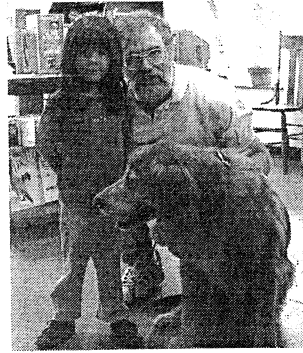
Leashes are communication devices.

Just like reins on the horse's bridle, leashes let us talk to our dogs.

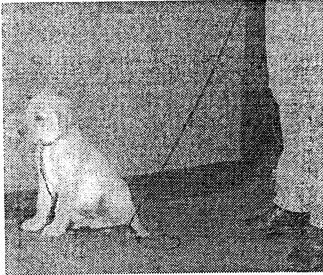
They help the dog feel connected to the group.

They let the dog know where it is going.

They keep the dog from feeling alone.



Leashes are a dog's safety rope.



If I were on the top of Mount Everest with a Sherpa guide, I would know the guide was there to keep me safe.

The rope that connected us would become a symbol of security to me.

It could easily reach across the language barrier.

My leader could quickly get my attention.

I would know who was making the decisions to keep me safe, so I would be free to relax.

Dogs jump to get attention.

It seems cute when puppies jump when they are little, but we need to start them off the right way.



If, instead of giving attention in the form of pushing, yelling, or correcting, we actively withdraw attention, a dog will learn not to jump.

Do not even waste a "NO!"

Cross your arms and turn your head away to actively withdraw attention.



By taking away the reward of attention, and giving attention again when four feet are on the floor—ideally with the dog sitting—the dog is directed to the correct behavior.

Remember: pushing and shoving may be seen as an invitation to play—not a correction. Even a harsh voice may be considered attention.

Hide-n-seek

It is more than a game.

It is a lesson in teaching your dog to react to you, and not the other way around.



If your dog's attention leaves you when you are outside, hide.

Teach your dog to worry where you are.

You are the leader, so your dog should learn to follow you.

You keep your dog safe.

Puppies need to learn it is safe to be handled.



Massage them.

Trim their nails.

Groom them.

Open their mouths.

Reward them with attention, play and food.

Even going to the vet will be a familiar, relaxing experience.

Crating teaches dogs they are safe, even when they are alone.

Housebreaking is easier, because dogs do not want to soil where they will have to be.

The less they move, the less they will feel the need to go, so they can learn to hold longer and be comfortable.

I make the crate part of the furniture.

I feed him in the crate when we eat.

He can not destroy my things when he is safely in his crate.

I take it with me when I travel, so he always has a safe place.

Cats feel safe up high.

Dogs feel safe in small places.

