

## MANAGEMENT

Management is another word for controlling the environment. It involves making changes in your dog's immediate living conditions and situations. Management will help you to PREVENT some problems from happening, especially with a puppy or young dog. You also decrease the likelihood of a recurring behavior problem developing. If your puppy never gets the opportunity to steal food from the counter, he will be much less likely to "counter surf" later.

Rather than punishing or blaming your dog for acting like a dog, you start thinking about ways to manage the problem behavior by changing the environment.

### Examples of management:

Crates, tethers, baby gates to confine the dog to a safe area

Drag line with supervision indoors (house leash)

Long drag line outside with supervision (not tied)

Leash

Head halter

Supervision!

Keeping counters clear of food

Picking up shoes and clothes

Closing doors to keep dog out of certain rooms

Placing overturned chairs on sofa to keep dog off

Supplying appropriate chew toys

Putting waste baskets up or behind doors

Appropriate physical exercise

Solid fences

Bringing the dog inside

Some examples of using management:

- Your dog can't chew up the chair legs if he isn't allowed to roam free in the house unsupervised at a young age.
- He can't jump on people at the door if you step on his leash, or crate him before company comes.
- Your dog won't raid the garbage if he can't get to it.
- He won't chew shoes if they are picked up or kept behind closed doors, and at the same time you supply him with chew toys.
- He won't steal food if nothing is left on the counters or if he is crated or tethered while you're cooking.
- Housetraining goes much faster if puppy is closely supervised.
- Your dog won't bother the neighbors by his barking if you bring him inside.
- He will be calmer indoors if given enough exercise and mental stimulation.

In addition to good management, you will still need to show your dog what you want him to DO, by paying attention to and rewarding good behavior.

Management is not the same as training – well, maybe it could be called training yourself – but it sure makes life easier. As your dog matures, you may be able to relax some of your management controls.

Management is also often an important component of training. For example, using a head halter to prevent pulling while you are training your dog to walk nicely on leash. Or using a tether while training your dog to keep “four on the floor” while greeting guests.

In some cases, you might choose to use management **INSTEAD** of actually training your dog. For example, if you have company infrequently, you could choose to crate your dog instead of training him not to jump. That would be fairer than yelling at him when he jumps up.

So – to solve behavior problems:

1. Use management. Figure out how to prevent your dog from being rewarded for the unwanted behavior. (See examples above.)
2. Identify what you want your dog **TO DO** instead of what you want him to *stop* doing.
3. Train your dog. Reward the desired behavior.

You might need an instructor’s help with steps two and three, but I bet you can do step one by yourself. Find a management tool that works. For some problems, that might even be all you’ll need!