DOG TRAINING LOGS
CHECKLISTS • DIPLOMA
EXCERPTS FROM

Training the Best Dog Ever

A **5-Week Program** Using the Power of **Positive Reinforcement**

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- No biting, no pulling, no accidents
- For puppies and adult dogs

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Dawn Sylvia-Stasiewicz and Larry Kay

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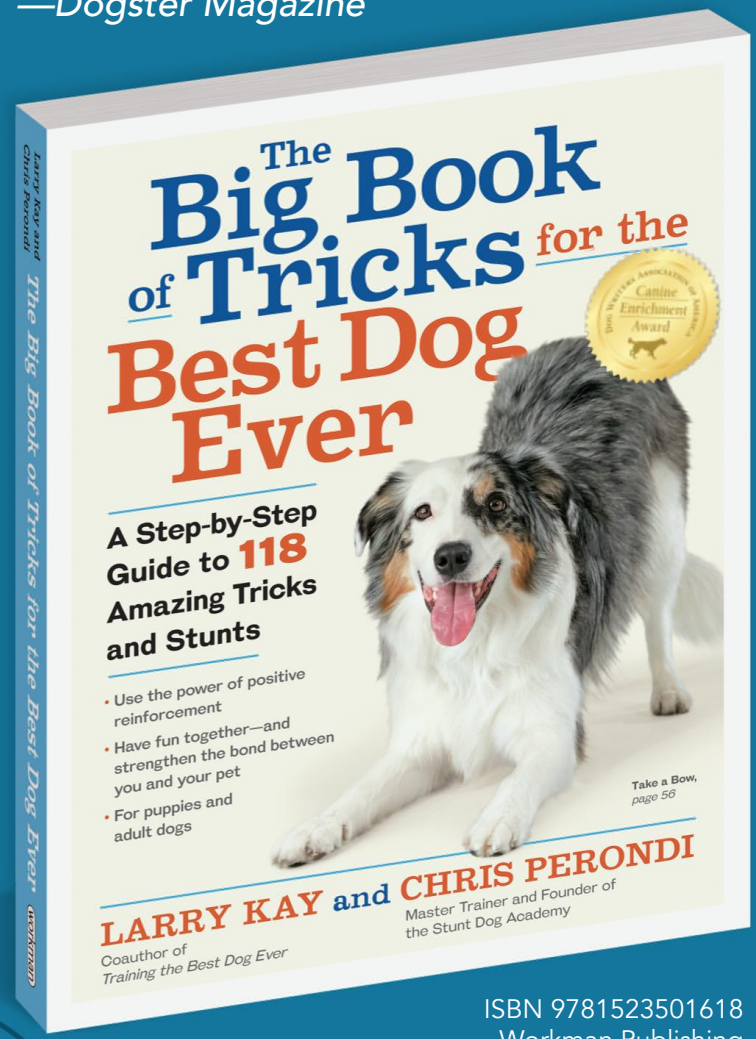

ISBN 9781523501618
Workman Publishing
320 pages

as seen on **GOOD MORNING AMERICA**

AWARD WINNER
Canine Enrichment Award
DOG WRITERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA & DOGTV

more than **450 COLOR PHOTOS**

Another WILDLY CREATIVE Project with Dogs by LARRY KAY

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available.

ISBN 978-0-7611-6885-0

Originally published as *The Love That Dog Training Program,* now revised and updated.

Design by Ariana Abud
Original interior photography by Evan Sklar
Additional photography credits on page 287.

Workman books are available at special discounts when purchased in bulk for premiums and sales promotions as well as for fund-raising or educational use. Special editions or book excerpts can also be created to specification. For details, contact the Special Sales Director at the address below or send an e-mail to specialmarkets@workman.com.

Workman Publishing Company, Inc.
225 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4381
workman.com

Printed in the United States of America
First printing August 2012
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Your quick guide to dog training

Congratulations on taking a lifelong adventure with your dog!

Whether you're new to having a dog, about to get a dog, or want to refresh your memory, this eBook is a quick guide to having a safe and caring home with your dog. The training logs will guide you through our book's five-week dog training program.

The following pages are excerpts from our award-winning book, which has now been translated into five languages. If you'd like to see videos that show this book's lessons in action and discover our community of dog lovers, ▶**click here**.

This eBook is designed to print on regular paper (8.5" x 11") and write on as you make progress in your dog's care and training.

If you have dog training questions, I would love to hear from you. No question is too small or too big. Chances are other folks have the same question. We take your questions and provide answers on our popular "Ask the Dog Trainer" column, and I invite you to ▶**click here**.

As in all dog training, remember to practice, be patient, stay positive, and have fun!

Best barks,
Larry
▶**speak@positivelywoof.com**

CONTENTS

PAGE NUMBERS

For easy reference, they're the page numbers in the full book.

CHECKLISTS - 16 pages

Set dog training goals, socialize your best friend to your world (including kids and other pets), maintain a daily routine, keep your home safe and well-supplied, help caregivers be successful with your dog, and prepare to take trips together.

230 | TRAINING THE BEST DOG EVER

Checklist: For Caregivers

After you have carefully selected the people to whom you are entrusting your cherished, spirited best friend, you'll need to provide them with basic information about your dog's habits and requirements, as well as your contact information. Here is a master checklist for you to adapt to your specific needs.

- ☐ Vet contact
- ☐ Emergency vet/animal hospital contact
- ☐ Vaccination record and other health information
- ☐ Medicine instructions
- ☐ Your contact info and schedule
- ☐ Backup contact (friend, neighbor, family member)
- ☐ Location of supplies: medicine, first aid kit, food, treats, leash, poop bags, toys, training toys and supplies, grooming and bathing supplies
- ☐ Meals (when to feed, ingredients, bowl-washing instructions)
- ☐ Treat instructions (when to give treats, quantity allowed per day, when to use stuffed Kongs)
- ☐ Leashing instructions (harness; tighten the collar one notch for walk, loosen after walk)
- ☐ Walking instructions (which side your dog heels on; cues he knows during walks, routes to travel, cautions about any possible trouble spots)
- ☐ Socializing instructions (whether dog park visits are okay and, if so, the protocol)
- ☐ Behavior problems, quirks, habits
- ☐ Crate or bed instructions
- ☐ List of cues your dog knows with verbal and hand signals
- ☐ List of tricks, noting verbal and hand signals
- ☐ Short list of favorite training games and activities
- ☐ Training cues and/or tricks that your dog is currently learning
- ☐ Toys for regular use and special training toys
- ☐ Brushing protocol and location
- ☐ Bathing and grooming protocol

Everyone who cares for your dog should be briefed on his needs and routine.

TRAINING LOGS - 10 pages

Track your dog's progress in the book's five-week dog training program. Each week has new skills, which you can also adapt to train at your own pace.

WEEK FOUR See the Fundamentals Program Week Four (Chapter Seven, page 111) for review.	day 1	day 2
RECALLS: ADD DISTRACTIONS AND DISTANCE Generalize to outdoor locations. With training partner's help, practice the Runaway and Lassie Recall exercise. *Page 113.*		
STAY UNTIL RECALLED: ADD DISTANCE, DURATION, AND DISTRACTIONS Add steps and time gradually, generalize to new locations. Circle around dog as he sits and stays. *Page 114.*		
DOWN: NAMING THE BEHAVIOR Practice Puppy Pushups (*sit-down-sit*), adding verbal cues to hand signals. *Page 113.*		
STANDING POSE As dog sits at your side, lure forward so that he stands to follow treat. When fluent, add to Puppy Pushups sequence, and add verbal cue ("pose"). *Page 113.*		
OFF AND TAKE IT TRADES: PHASE 2 Practice trades for items of equal or greater value. Trade special treats for portions of meal in food bowl. *Page 117.*		
CLIMBING STAIRS Cue a *sit*. Step and block dog with your leg. Mark, praise, and reward each step. Sit and praise at the end. *Page 120.*		
DOOR TRAINING Cue a *sit*, then say "off" before you open door and lead through with hand signal. Then mark, praise, reward. Later, add verbal cue "let's go." *Page 122.*		
SETTLE DOWN From *down-stay* position, offer treats one by one (vending machine technique). When dog relaxes, say "good settle." Also, hand-feed in *settle* position. *Page 125.*		
CATCH YOUR DOG DOING SOMETHING YOU LIKE Also, use Real-Life Rewards System. *Page 106.*		
POTTY TRAINING Keep track of input (meals and treats) and output (potty time). Note accidents. *Page 30.*		
BASELINE BEHAVIORS Hand-feeding; crate training; bite inhibition, handling, and gentling. *Pages 47, 51, 59.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 127.*		

DIPLOMA

Congratulations! Display your dog's graduation diploma with honor.

THE BEST DOG EVER

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

[your dog's name]

has successfully completed the

TRAINING THE BEST DOG EVER

FIVE-WEEK FUNDAMENTALS PROGRAM

- Mastering the 10 Basic Training Skills
- Demonstrating Good Socialization
- Displaying Signs of Being a Happy, Spirited Dog

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ABOUT

Discover Positively Woof's support for positive dog training, dog tricks, dog rescue, and celebrate with the P-Woof community of 1.9 million dog lovers. Meet Dawn and Larry.

Positively WOOF

CELEBRATE OUR BOND

Dog Care Checklists

THE CHECKLISTS

Use these next fifteen pages of checklists to focus and organize your dog care, training, socialization, and safety.

- Set your dog training goals (2 pages)
- Develop a daily routine (2 pages)
- Get supplies for dog care and training (4 pages)
- Dogproof your home, yard, and car (4 pages)
- Tips for a home with kids and other pets (2 pages)
- Travel successfully with your dog (1 page)
- Orient your dog's caregivers (1 page)

Checklist: Setting Goals

Here is a checklist to help you set your goals. Try picking only your top ten, so that you can get an idea of what is most important to you. The list doesn't need to be perfect or final; it's just a tool to help you get focused and specific.

AT HOME

❒ My dog is impeccably **house-trained.** My dog knows where to go potty and goes potty on cue. When she needs to go outside, she gives me the signal that I taught her.

❒ **The crate** is my dog's home. She enjoys her crate, goes to it when asked, and keeps calm inside it.

❒ My dog **settles down** when I ask her. Although I love it when my dog is enthusiastic, she doesn't jump up unless she's invited.

❒ **Mealtimes** are enjoyable and calm. My dog sits to receive her food and does not guard it from people or other animals. She doesn't bother me when I am eating.

❒ **Grooming** my dog is a pleasant experience. She enjoys being handled while I brush her. She accepts bath time with ease and enjoys being handled and massaged.

❒ My dog obeys the **furniture rules** and **chews only** what is allowed.

❒ Although my dog likes being with me, she **isn't so needy** that she shadows me everywhere. When I leave the house, my dog relaxes. When I return, she is happy and mellow.

TRAINING

❒ My dog and I **love to train** for a quick minute when the opportunity arises. We also love doing our training homework daily and bond more closely while we train.

❒ **Sitting** calmly is my dog's way of saying please. He sits when asked and has learned the situations in which I usually ask him to sit.

❒ **"Down"** and **"stay"** are mastered. When I cue the command, my dog does it without hesitation.

❒ My dog **loves hearing his name** and is attentive when I say it.

❒ **"Come here"** is mastered. When I recall my dog, he comes to me right away.

❒ **Playtime** is fun for my dog and me. When others are invited to play, they are safe and so is my dog. When I ask him to give back a toy or let go of it, he does so right away.

❒ **Tricks** are now a fun part of our ongoing training. As my dog masters each trick, we are joyful and proud together. I love to show off his tricks to other people.

SOCIALIZATION

❒ When the **doorbell** rings, my dog is interested, but sits until cued to **greet a visitor.**

❒ **Walking** with my dog is joyful and relaxing. She loves walking on a leash by my side, and she responds when I ask her to finish sniffing and resume walking.

❒ When we **meet other dogs,** mine is well behaved regardless of what they do.

❒ When we encounter **strange noises or surprises,** my dog is mildly interested but doesn't freeze or try to fight or flee.

❒ When we go to the **groomer** or the **veterinarian,** my dog and these professionals are happy to see each other.

❒ When my dog is allowed to join me **inside a place of business,** she has impeccable behavior. I feel like I can take my dog anywhere.

❒ **Car rides** are peaceful with my dog. She loves to go in the car with me.

Proper socialization helps a dog feel safe and comfortable, even in new situations.

If you were able to narrow the list down to your top ten, good job; that will help you and your dog be successful together. Trust that whatever priorities you pick are going to be the right priorities, and don't worry about the others for now. Don't get stuck on trying to be perfect; in this book, perfect means "perfect for you." If you follow the training program, and are disciplined about doing your homework, you'll go far. After all, if you make no choices, you will end up neglecting your dog's social and emotional needs. So make your choices and feel good about them. Post your list of goals on the fridge or somewhere you can see it. Be inspired by it.

From Goals to Plan: The Daily Routine

Keeping to a schedule tells your new dog, regardless of his age, that you, his benevolent leader, are in charge. It helps him learn the household rules and understand that he must "work" for his food and his privileges. Dogs respect and want that kind of safe certainty. In time, both you and your dog will find the daily schedule and routine . . . well, routine.

It's important to get your dog started on his routine as soon as you bring him home—each point on the daily routine represents an opportunity to train him—which means that you should begin preparing for a new schedule of your own weeks before you visit your shelter or breeder to choose your dog. While your dog's routine will ultimately depend on his needs and yours, every day must include time for feeding, potty, walking, and play.

Here's a sample routine for you to look over. But don't worry about it too much now: We'll cover every step in the course of our five-week training program, with detailed instructions.

Morning Routine

- **wake up.** Greet the dog at her crate, ask for a sit before opening the crate, direct your dog out of the crate, and ask for another sit.
- **potty.** From the crate, go outside (with a sit at the door) to do a potty on cue. Give your dog a treat when she obeys you. A sit at the door, then back inside for breakfast.
- **breakfast.** A sit as you prepare to give your dog her breakfast.
- **puppy potty.** If you have a puppy, go outside again to potty, using the potty-training protocol we'll discuss later (see page 50). Always give your puppy a treat when she goes potty.
- **brush and comb.** Handle your dog all over as you brush and comb her coat.
- **walk.** Use the walk training program (see page 75).
- **puppy potty.** Each time you crate and uncrate your puppy, take her outside to potty.
- **crate time is nap time.** Your dog learns to love her crate as you give her time in it when you go to work, go out on errands on which your dog cannot accompany you, or need time to do things around the house. As she becomes comfortable with these scheduled naps in her crate, the possibility of separation anxiety lessens.

Afternoon Routine

- **greet.** Each time you let your new dog out of the crate, continue the crate training protocol . . .
- **potty.** . . . and the potty-training protocol.
- **train.** Take time for your formal daily 10-minute homework practice. (Each week's suggested agenda is detailed in your five-week Fundamentals Training Program.)
- **puppy potty.** You know the drill.
- **socialization.** Depending on your dog's readiness, you may choose to go on a brief car ride or on a walk. You might visit a neighbor or neighboring dogs in a place where you can do socialization exercises. If you have children, this might be the right time to socialize your dog with your kids. (Socialization activities are spelled out throughout the book.)
- **relax at home.** Brushing, petting, or engaging in other quiet activities that bond you and your dog.
- **puppy potty.** Should be familiar to you . . . and becoming more familiar for your pup.
- **crate time is nap time.** The purpose, again, is to help your dog love his crate and not associate crate time with exile or punishment.

Evening Routine

- **greet.** Sometimes the afternoon crate time might be brief.
- **potty.** Notice how you're building your dog's association of getting out of the crate with going potty—all while practicing the *sit* cues on the way.
- **suppertime.** Similar routine to breakfast.
- **puppy potty.** It's that time again.
- **walk.** Can be a socialization walk or a special time for you and your dog. It's your call.
- **puppy potty.** You're another day closer to having a potty-trained dog.
- **family time.** Rotate a variety of activities, keeping your focus on your dog for 10 minutes. This may be a good time to involve your kids in assisting you with her training. It's important that the dog be socialized to your whole family. Remember that you must always supervise when kids are involved.
- **potty.** Build up your dog's understanding that potty time comes before good-night time.

Good Night

- **crate.** Into the crate for rest. If you've exercised enough today, your dog is more likely to sleep better, and so are you. I like to express my daily gratitude and blessing to my dog.

Middle of the Night

- **puppy potty.** Your middle-of-the-night puppy potty routine will come to an end. I promise.

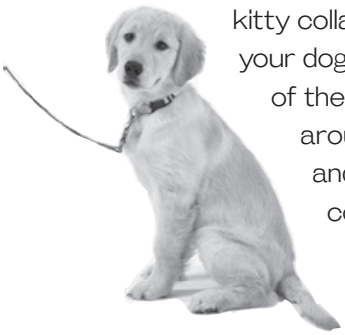
Checklist: Around the House

Preparing for your dog's arrival involves not only buying supplies such as a leash and toys, but also taking measures to make your home safe for your new pet. You should also establish the extent to which any children in your household are allowed to interact with the dog, plus what rooms or areas will be no-dog zones (including parts of your yard or garden). Look over these checklists to make sure you'll be ready when your dog arrives—or to update your home for the dog you already have.

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Your dog's basic equipment and supplies can be purchased inexpensively and resourcefully, or you can spend more outfitting your dog than you did buying her from a top-line breeder. How much you spend I'll leave up to you, but here's your shopping list.

❒ **Flat buckle collar.** When her collar is complete with dog tags, it's your dog's uniform. I recommend a flat buckle collar in either leather or webbed fiber. (You may need to start with a lightweight kitty collar, just to get your dog used to the feel of the collar while she's around your home, and use a heavier collar on walks.)



Flat buckle collar and leash

❒ **Dog tags.** One tag should display your name, the dog's name, and your phone numbers. Local laws may also require you to display a dog license tag that includes current vaccination data. If you have a second residence, such as a weekend house or a beach house, you should have an extra set of tags with local phone numbers made.

❒ **Training collars (optional).** I am against the use of choke collars and prong collars, as they can be misused and can hurt a dog unnecessarily. I support the careful use of some head-collar training devices (the ones that look somewhat like horse halters), such as the Gentle Leader, as long as you follow the manufacturer's instructions, as improper use can hurt your dog. I'll tell you more about using the Gentle Leader in Chapter Eleven, Behavior Problems (page 194).

Gentle Leader training collar

❒ **Martingale collar, also called a Greyhound collar (optional).** If you have a dog with a narrow head, such as a Greyhound, you may want to use this collar, but only when taking the dog on a walk, because the collar may get caught on something. It has an extra loop that tightens around the dog's neck if he pulls, but will not choke the dog if you fit it properly.

Martingale or Greyhound collar

❒ **Harness (optional).** Many owners find that they can walk their dog with more control when his leash is attached to a harness instead of a collar. I prefer harnesses where the leash attaches at the dog's chest, rather than on his back. Many breeds treat the top-of-the-back attachment as an invitation to pull, while the chest attachment causes the dog to turn toward you when he pulls. Make sure that the harness fits snugly and check your dog for chafing.

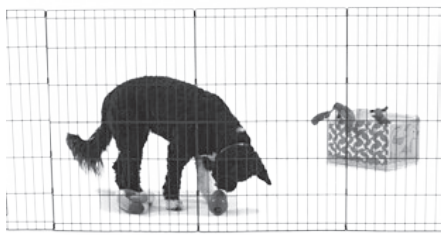
Body harness

❒ **Leash.** I recommend a six-foot leash (instead of a four-footer) so that your dog can get a little extra freedom, especially during exercises when you tether him to your belt. If you're thinking about using a retractable leash, such as a Flexi, wait until your dog has completed the five-week fundamentals program, has developed excellent recall, and can walk politely at a loose heel.

❒ **Crate.** See the crate training section (page 53) to help you choose what's right for your dog and your decor.

Use the x-pen as a playpen . . .

❒ **X-pen.** If your budget will allow it, get a collapsible exercise pen, often called an x-pen, as your dog's movable playpen area. This lightweight, portable pen can be used to keep a dog in or out of an area. Set it up as a contained ring or divide a room like the Berlin



. . . or as a room divider.

Wall . . . to be taken down when your dog matures. You will find other uses for your x-pen while you go through this training program. To keep my dogs from moving ours, I tie dumbbell weights with bungee straps to the bottom of the pen.

❒ **Baby gates.** These movable gates help you close off rooms or keep your dog confined to a particular room.

❒ **Bedding.** Since your new dog may chew his bed, choose an inexpensive option at first—towels and cheap blankets.

❒ **Food bowl and water bowl.** Although I'm a fan of bowls that fit into a raised housing, you may want to go as simple and lightweight as possible at first, especially as you're mastering the hand-feeding protocol (detailed in the next chapter). Once hand-feeding has been mastered, you can switch to a more deluxe setup, including a metal or ceramic bowl that is easy to sterilize.

❒ **Food and treats.** See the feeding section in the next chapter (page 46) for guidance in making diet choices. Remember to set aside a portion of your dog's daily diet for training treats.

❒ **Toys for play.** Allowing a dog to "own" only a couple of toys that he can play with whenever he wants to will help create opportunities for training. Don't allow him to destroy or shred toys; blocked intestines can require surgery. Always supervise toy play.

❒ **Toys for chewing.** Chewing is a dog's natural impulse. So, rather than tempting your dog to chew things she shouldn't, direct her chewing behavior positively by regularly giving her toys that are made to be chewed. My favorite chew toy is the Kong, because younger dogs love them and yet they are practically indestructible. A Kong can be stuffed with treats or dog food to slow down a dog that eats too fast; you can give it to her while she is in her crate or as a reward.

Fill a Kong with treats for constructive chewing.

Have a few stuffed Kongs handy as special rewards.

❒ **Toys for training.** These are special toys that I "lend" to my dog as a reward during training sessions; after some brief moments of play, he has to give them back to me in exchange for a cookie, a training technique that I will teach you later (see page 117). They can be delicate rubber squeaky toys or special plush toys, and are always returned to me for safekeeping.

I also use tug toys and retrieving toys as training rewards. And then I always have a very special toy in reserve to trade with my dog when he has taken contraband, such as a shoe, or to stop unwanted chase behavior. For contraband trades, I recommend a plush toy that has lots of squeaky and crinkly features, and that can't easily be shredded. Avoid toys that would get chewed up if left with your dog for more than a minute.

❒ **Special training equipment and supplies.** As you go through the program in this book, I will discuss a number of special supplies, including a 50-foot leash for recall training (a rope tied securely to the end of your dog's leash can suffice), a clicker for trick training, and a treat pouch that clips to your belt.

Treat pouch

❒ **Coat grooming.** Your basic list includes a brush that is right for your breed, plus a comb, coat rake, and shedding blade. If you bathe your dog yourself, use a dog shampoo and coat conditioner.

❒ **Nail care.** Options include a nail clipper and emery board, or an electric nail grooming tool. I personally like the PediPaws. Also get some styptic powder or cornstarch to stop bleeding in case you accidentally cut too close.

❒ **Oral hygiene.** Use only toothpaste that has been formulated for dogs, plus a soft-bristled toothbrush. Dental treats can help when they're used as an addition to toothbrushing, but not as a substitute. Bad dental hygiene can lead to infection, which, when it travels through the bloodstream, can cause heart disease and more. Brushing your dog's teeth regularly is as important to his well-being as good dental hygiene is to yours.

❒ **Poop bags/waste disposal system.** If your dog uses a potty area in your yard, have a pickup tool or scoop and disposal container nearby. If he does his business on walks, make sure to pick it up with poop bags. I recommend biodegradable pickup bags; they're available at most pet stores as well as online.

❒ **First-aid kit.** You can buy a ready-made kit or assemble your own. At minimum, the kit should have a tick remover, cleaning solution such as hydrogen peroxide, antiseptic cream, gauze wraps, first-aid adhesive tape, scissors, and sterile eyewash. Some excellent first-aid kits, available at pet stores, contain upwards of 60 items.

Keep your dog healthy by being prepared for emergencies.

DOGPROOFING AND SETUP

You may find it hard to believe, but having dogs in my home actually helps me be a better housekeeper. I am always looking for ways to keep the dogs out of trouble in my house and yard. Here is a dogproofing checklist to make you a better housekeeper, too.

❒ **Shoes.** Most dogs can't resist the temptation of the smell of your feet on leather or canvas. If you wear your shoes in the house, put them away in a closet and remember to keep the door closed. If you don't wear shoes in your house, put all shoes by the door in an area that your dog can't get to. If necessary, put an x-pen around the shoes.

❒ **Toys.** Fuzzy shapes and easy-to-chew toys are too often a doggy delicacy. Put them away. Keep toy closets, toy boxes, and cabinets closed.

❒ **Homework, bills, important papers.** "My dog ate my homework" may convince your child's teacher, but bill collectors tend not to accept that excuse. Recently, when I wasn't paying attention, Boz chewed some pages out of a dog training log. Yes, even the experts make mistakes; with some dogs it takes only a moment's distraction.

❒ **Clothes.** Don't hang clothes so low that they can be dragged away, and keep them off the floor, especially once they've been worn and have your delightful smell on them.

❒ **Kitchen.** Counter surfing (when a dog jumps up to see what goodies are on the counters) is a favorite dog sport. Keep your counters clean of any traces of food, your cabinet doors shut, and objects that are dangerous or breakable well out of surfing reach. Also make sure that cleaning supplies (including sponges and gloves) are well beyond your dog's reach. In fact, it's wise to prepare your kitchen as though you were childproofing it: All potentially poisonous products should be stowed away, behind cabinet doors secured with childproof locks.

❒ **Garbage pails and wastebaskets.** Keep them out of reach, and empty them often.

❒ **Bathroom.** Keep toilet lids down, especially if there are chemicals in the water. Beware of toilet paper getting unspooled or even chewed right off the roll. Soap bars look like dog treats, so keep them out of surfing range. It's a lot to control, which is why it is usually easiest just to keep bathroom doors shut at all times.

❒ **Shut doors.** In fact, you may want to keep most doors shut when you can't supervise your dog. Especially make sure you shut any doors that open to the outdoors.

❒ **Towels.** Keep towels near the door so that you can wipe your dog's feet and coat. I suggest that you practice wiping your dog's feet and coat before he gets caught in his first rainstorm, so that he's comfortable when you need to dry

him off quickly. Most dogs are more comfortable with your wiping their front paws first and then their hind paws.

❒ **Toxics.** While most toxic substances are in the kitchen and bathroom, make sure that no stray sprays, cleaners, or alcohol are misplaced or stored within your dog's surfing reach.

❒ **Bitter apple spray.** Most dogs don't like the taste of bitter apple spray. It works best when sprayed in advance to help teach the dog to keep out of a wastebasket, off a counter, or from chewing furniture. Another option is a hotsauce-and-perfume mix. Test any sprays to make sure that they don't stain.

❒ **Electrical cords.** Tack them to baseboards; keep them out of sight. If you can't supervise a dog in a room where he can reach electrical cords, consider taking the dog out of that room. Dogs can be electrocuted or strangled by electrical cords.

❒ **Curtain cords.** If your curtains have dangling cords, install cleats high up and tie off the cords.

❒ **Plants.** Make sure that your houseplants are out of reach. If you're not sure if a plant is toxic, the ASPCA website (aspca.org) has a good list of plants that are toxic to dogs and other pets.

❒ **Crate safety.** Make sure that your dog's crate is in a comfortable spot that is not too hot or too cold.

❒ **Baby gates.** Use baby gates to block off rooms, especially if doors can't be closed. Some people don't like hiking over baby gates, but I have done it for years and don't mind. Some baby gates include swinging doors if hiking and hurdling are a problem for you.

FURNITURE RULES

Is your dog allowed on the couch or comfy chairs? Some trainers believe that allowing dogs on furniture undermines your authority, but I don't agree. I think it's an issue of personal preference and that whatever decision you make, you can keep your authority intact.

Of course, most dog owners have a furniture story to tell. My rule is no dogs on the couch, which my dogs obey when I'm at home . . . but sometimes disobey when I'm out. One evening I came inside the house quietly and saw Jock, Merit, and Saxon scatter off the furniture like cockroaches. One of the pillows had been shredded. Even though Saxon had pillow fuzz all over his beard, I couldn't do anything about it, since I didn't catch him in the act. For a while after that, I put the x-pen panels on the couch and furniture, and kept the remaining pillows out of reach. In the end, when it comes to setting furniture rules, it's important to stay consistent, and not to tempt your dog by leaving him alone in the room while you're still training.

YARD SETUP

When your dog first comes home, you will always have to supervise him outside. Here are some precautions you should take to make your yard safer for your dog.

❒ **Fencing.** If your neighborhood allows fencing, make sure that there are no gaps in yours, including open gates and areas hidden by bushes. Swimming pools should be fenced or, at minimum, have a pool cover that the dog cannot squeeze under. Fence off or remove any other temptations, and seal off access to areas underneath the house, porches, and decks.

❒ **Electric fencing (optional).** Some people like so-called invisible fencing: electronic sensors that are placed or buried around the perimeter of the yard that trigger an electronic shock collar when the dog wanders near. I'm not a big fan of electric fences—if the dog endures the shock while chasing, say, a squirrel past the perimeter, he is less likely to return because he quickly learns that he will have to endure more shocks. I say that when your dog is outside in an unfenced yard, so are you. If you use an electric fence or shock collar, test it weekly to ensure that it's operating correctly—and at the correct voltage for your dog.

❒ **Mulch and plants.** Mulch and many plants can be toxic or impact your dog's bowels. Consider putting garden fencing around plant beds if you treasure their appearance. Remove all poisonous plants. Refer to the ASPCA website (aspca.org) for a list and photos of well over 350 plants that are toxic to dogs.

❒ **Septic tank.** Make sure that the cover can't be pried open.

❒ **Grill.** Keep it covered.

❒ **Bird feeders.** Any bird feeders must be out of the dog's jumping reach, or moved where the dog isn't allowed to go.

❒ **Potty area.** If you don't want your dog doing his business everywhere he wants on your property (and who does?), establish his potty area from day one. If you have a yard, the ideal potty area will be located near the house for quick access, as well as within reach of a garden hose. It should be at least 10 feet by 10 feet, and about 3 inches deep, and layered with a bed of absorbent sand, covered with pea gravel or small river rock. Be prepared to clean the potty area often.

❒ **Patio.** If you live in an apartment and have a patio, you can build or purchase a children's sandbox to use as a potty area, complete with artificial turf (that must be cleaned), actual sod, or high-tech grids. Have your poop equipment nearby, whether you use biodegradable bags, a garden trowel, or a long-handled scoop.

❒ **Common areas.** If you live in a building or housing development with a common dog run, make sure to follow all the rules for cleanup.

CAR SETUP

An image that practically defines family life is a car trip—complete with a dog. We'll get to that idyllic journey with the family dog in Chapter Twelve. Right now, let's set up your car for everyday trips: going to the vet, to a friend's home, on errands, or to the park.

❒ **Backseat riding.** Your dog should ride in the backseat, ideally inside a carrier crate or strapped in with a dog seat belt harness.

❒ **Seat cover.** You can protect the seat with a blanket or purchase seat covers.

❒ **Ramp or steps.** Some dogs need help getting into cars, so be prepared to lift yours or use a ramp or steps.

❒ **Ventilation.** Make sure your dog gets proper ventilation, either by air-conditioning or a fan, or with windows that are open just enough to get some breeze.

❒ **Head in the car.** Although another iconic image is that of a dog sticking his head out a car window, it's dangerous to let your dog do that. Countless injuries occur from flying debris.

SAFETY RULES IN A HOME WITH KIDS

My kids have grown up around a whole menagerie of pets, especially dogs. Although I have allowed them to have their own gerbils, snakes, and cats, all our family dogs have been *my* dogs. I let my kids help with dog care, but I believe that dogs require too much hands-on effort to entrust their primary care to children. Over the life of a dog, your kids will go through many life changes, starting and stopping new fads and relationships more quickly than it takes to complete this training program—even if they promise with completely honest intentions that "this time is different."

When your dog or puppy first arrives at her new home, she may be frightened. But whether your family is adopting a shy dog, a carefree puppy, or a confident dog, explain to your children that everyone's habits and schedules will change. And if your dog has been in your home for some time, you can teach an old family new tricks. As every parent knows, children don't always have reliable impulse control, especially with all the excitement that comes with getting a new dog. Rule number one for you: You must supervise kids when they play with the dog. Rule number one for kids: They must ask to play with the dog. Ultimately, your job is to set the example; your kids will imitate what you do. It will be helpful to discuss the following rules with your children before the dog comes

home. Remember that more than two million children have been bitten by dogs in the past year.

Your children will eventually learn impulse control, but right now you are training them as much as your dog. I supervised my kids around dogs until they were 11 or 12, but I'll leave it to you to determine when you feel that your child is skilled enough and mature enough to be left alone with the dog.

❒ **Ask permission.** You must ask me to play with the dog. I am the dog's supervisor.

❒ **Keep calm.** For the next few weeks, there will be no running or making loud noises in the house.

❒ **Get help.** If there is a problem with the dog and I'm not in the room, you must come get me immediately.

❒ **Keep the dog enclosed.** All doors to the outside must stay closed when the dog is not in her crate. Never let the dog out of the house unsupervised. If baby gates and x-pens are up to keep the dog out of (or inside) certain areas of the home, those barriers must not be moved without my help.

❒ **Stay seated.** You must sit on the floor while handling the puppy.

❒ **No physical punishment.** Never hit the dog when she makes a mistake. You could hurt her and she could hurt you back.

❒ **Let the dog sleep.** When the dog is sleeping, don't touch her. You could scare her and she might bite you. If you must wake the dog, ask me to do it.

❒ **No feeding.** You're not allowed to feed the dog or touch the dog while she is eating unless it is part of a training exercise I'm supervising.

❒ **Stay out of the crate.** Never climb inside the dog's crate unless it is part of a socialization program that a grown-up is supervising.

Establishing ground rules will keep both your dog and your children safe.

OTHER PETS IN YOUR HOME

When my daughter Paige was 12 and old enough to be entrusted with a cat, she did her research, saved her money, and bought a Siamese kitten that she named Isles. At this time, my Giant Schnauzer, Saxon, was seven years old, and had grown accustomed to being the king of the house. I knew that it was going to take a lot of time and patience before I could expect Saxon and Isles to coexist peacefully. Here's how I handled their introduction.

❒ **Baby gates.** Initially, they were kept apart with baby gates, and although they could see each other, no interactions were allowed.

❒ **Sitting and meeting.** Three months later, I formally introduced them. Every day, Paige and I would put Isles in my lap and give him a treat. When Saxon sat perfectly, we'd also give him a treat. If Isles got nervous or if Saxon started to get excited, that would be the end of the session.

❒ **Lie down.** Saxon graduated to "lie downs" and "settles" next to Isles and me.

❒ **Supervised interaction.** Over the course of an intensive week of supervision, Saxon and Isles could be around each other while I watched.

❒ **Unsupervised Interaction.** Eventually they could be together without supervision. In fact, Isles grew to like dogs, started to play with Saxon, and a great relationship developed between them.

My experience is that with patience and positive reinforcement training, most dogs will coexist safely with other pets. It just takes time. Right now, I keep Boz mostly separate from Brieo and from the other dogs that are boarding with me. Boz works well when he's with me one-on-one, but when he's with other dogs, he gets overexcited and tries to herd them (this is natural behavior for a Border Collie). Before I decide to introduce Boz to the other dogs here, I want to get him used to Brieo. I started by feeding him upstairs and tethering him on a leash at all times—a training technique I recommend using when a dog first comes home, which we will discuss in the next chapter. I'm experimenting with different activities, erring on the side of caution always, such as feeding the dogs in the same room, separated by a chair.

Once you bring your dog home, it may take weeks, or perhaps even months, to get him comfortable with your other pets, and vice versa. With the right supervision and step-by-step progress, however, the transition should go smoothly. Just remember: When introducing pets to each other, be extremely patient. To repeat myself: Always err on the side of caution.

Checklist: For Trips

Nothing is more important for a happy trip than a well-packed bag of doggy supplies. What follows is a basic list of trip necessities; over time, you will learn to customize the list for your dog's particular needs. For example, if he is prone to sticking his nose where he shouldn't, you'll probably want to load up on extra Benadryl—though be sure to check with your vet about dosage first. Once, Jock stuck his nose into a hill of fire ants while we were at a rest stop in Florida. He was not a happy camper. Fortunately, I had an emergency kit in my van for the kids and the dogs and was able to clean Jock's nose, disinfect it, and then give him a Benadryl tablet to reduce the possibility of an allergic reaction. One more example: Sometimes the change in drinking water can make a dog sick or affect his appetite, so you may need to mix home water with the new water.

- ❒ Trip dog tag with destination phone number and address
- ❒ Rabies shot certificate or tag
- ❒ Local phone numbers: emergency vet, poison control, snakebite assistance
- ❒ Leash
- ❒ Poop pickup bags
- ❒ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ❒ Dog food
- ❒ Training treats
- ❒ Clean drinking water from home
- ❒ Food and water bowls
- ❒ Lightweight travel bowl for hiking
- ❒ Blankets/dog bed
- ❒ X-pen or crate
- ❒ First aid kit: includes tweezers, tick remover, snakebite kit, antibiotic cream, hydrogen peroxide, sterile gauze bandages, and tape
- ❒ Mylar space blanket for treating hypothermia
- ❒ Medicine if necessary (Remember, some medication needs to be refrigerated; if so, you must make accommodations for that.)
- ❒ Flea and tick prevention (including heartworm pills in many locales)
- ❒ Mosquito repellent (on coat, not rubbed into skin) and mosquito-repelling citronella candles
- ❒ Medicated ear and eye cleaners
- ❒ Grooming kit: comb, brush, blow-dryer (if needed), shampoo, creme rinse
- ❒ Dog towels
- ❒ Toys: Kong, balls, safe toys that can't be swallowed

Checklist: For Caregivers

After you have carefully selected the people to whom you are entrusting your cherished, spirited best friend, you'll need to provide them with basic information about your dog's habits and requirements, as well as your contact information. Here is a master checklist for you to adapt to your specific needs.

- ❒ Vet contact
- ❒ Emergency vet/animal hospital contact
- ❒ Vaccination record and other health information
- ❒ Medicine instructions
- ❒ Your contact info and schedule
- ❒ Backup contact (friend, neighbor, family member)
- ❒ Location of supplies: medicine, first aid kit, food, treats, leash, poop bags, toys, training toys and supplies, grooming and bathing supplies
- ❒ Meals (when to feed, ingredients, bowl-washing instructions)
- ❒ Treat instructions (when to give treats, quantity allowed per day, when to use stuffed Kongs)
- ❒ Leashing instructions (harness; tighten the collar one notch for walk, loosen after walk)
- ❒ Walking instructions (which side your dog heels on, cues he knows during walks, routes to travel, cautions about any possible trouble spots)
- ❒ Socializing instructions (whether dog park visits are okay and, if so, the protocol)
- ❒ Behavior problems, quirks, habits
- ❒ Crate or bed instructions
- ❒ List of cues your dog knows with verbal and hand signals
- ❒ List of tricks, noting verbal and hand signals
- ❒ Short list of favorite training games and activities
- ❒ Training cues and/or tricks that your dog is currently learning
- ❒ Toys for regular use and special training toys
- ❒ Brushing protocol and location
- ❒ Bathing and grooming protocol

Everyone who cares for your dog should be briefed on his needs and routine.

Dog Training Logs

THE LOGS

On the following ten pages (two pages per week), chart your dog's progress in bonding with you, socialization, house manners, hand feeding, crate training, potty training, and these obedience cues:

- Luring
- Sit
- Down
- Stay
- Come/Recall
- Release/Go
- Off and Take It Trades
- Stand
- Leash Walking
- Doorbell and Boundary Rules

While the program is designed to be completed in five weeks, you are invited to train at the pace that works best for dog's learning and your available time.

LURING TO COME / RECALL

LURING TO SIT

WEEK ONE

Use this log to chart your dog training progress. See Feeding, Potty Training, and Crating (Chapter Three, page 43) and the Fundamentals Program Week One (Chapter Four, page 63) for review.

	day 1	*day 2*
USING TREATS AS LURES Practice luring your dog with treats. *Page 66.*		
LURING TO SIT Touch treat to dog's nose, lure up (rump goes down), mark, praise, touch collar, treat last. *Page 70.*		
LURING TO RECALL, PART 1 Take 2 or 3 steps back, lure dog. Mark, praise, touch collar, treat last. **EXTRA:** If dog already sits, add a sit before the treat. Be animated and happy when you lure. *Page 73.*		
EYE-CONTACT EXERCISE Touch treat to dog's nose, then bring it to your eyes. Mark and reward for dog's eye contact. *Page 74.*		
WALKING: "BE A TREE" When dog pulls leash, stop and hold leash firmly to your body. When dog looks back at you, mark, lure, and start again. *Page 76.*		
LEASH TETHERING Tether your dog while moving around your home. *Page 45.*		
HAND-FEEDING Feed all meals by hand from dog's bowl. Your dog sees that you are the giver of food. *Page 47.*		
POTTY TRAINING Keep track of input (meals and treats) and output (potty time). Note accidents. *Page 50.*		
CRATE TRAINING Teach dog to love his crate. Many treats and meals in and around crate. *Page 53.*		
BITE INHIBITION, HANDLING, GENTLING "Ouch" exercise. Lots of gentle handling. Touch paws and all over body. *Page 59.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 79.*		

WEEK ONE

day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	NOTES

From *Training the Best Dog Ever*

WEEK TWO

See the Fundamentals Program Week Two (Chapter Five, page 81) for review.

	day 1	day 2
TETHERING EXERCISE With your dog tethered to you, move randomly around your home or yard. Every time dog looks at you, mark, touch collar, and treat. *Page 82.*		
REAL-LIFE REWARDS SYSTEM Cue your dog to sit for everything, including all meals, at start of walks and training, before going into and exiting crate, and playing. *Page 83.*		
SIT: HAND SIGNAL, FROM LURE TO CUE Try to increase your dog's speedy response to your hand signal (visual cue) without causing failure. *Page 85.*		
SIT: WITHDRAW TREATS Put the treats in your other hand while cueing *sit*. Then withdraw treats slowly by using slot machine technique. *Page 86.*		
RECALL: INCREASE LURING DISTANCE, ADD VERBAL CUE Add *sit* at end of recall. Increase distance one step at a time. Add "[Dog's name], come here!" verbal/visual cue. *Page 87.*		
DOWN Start from *sit*. Slide treat toward dog's chest then lure straight down. When dog begins following *down,* mark, praise, touch collar, and then treat last. *Page 89.*		
RELEASE: VERBAL CUE After training, drop leash and say "release" or "go play." Pat dog and point to play area. *Page 91.*		
HAND-FEEDING AND CRATE TRAINING Hand-feed all meals in and around crate. Teach dog to love his crate. *Pages 47, 53.*		
POTTY TRAINING Keep track of input (meals and treats) and output (potty time). Note accidents. *Page 50.*		
BITE INHIBITION, HANDLING, GENTLING "Ouch" exercise. Lots of gentle handling. Touch paws and all over body. *Page 59.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 93.*		

day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	NOTES

WEEK THREE

See the Fundamentals Program Week Three (Chapter Six, page 95) for review.

	day 1	day 2
WALKING Add informal heeling with *walk-stop-sit-walk-stop-sit* exercise. Troubleshoot leash pulling with "be a tree," leash tethering, Follow the Lure. *Page 107.*		
SIT: ADD VERBAL CUE Combine the verbal cue with hand signal throughout this training program. Continue giving clear hand signals. *Page 98.*		
PUPPY PUSHUPS *Sit-down-sit*. Mark each *sit*, *down*, and *sit*. Praise, touch collar, and treat at end of each cycle. Sharpen dog's response to cues and focus on you. *Page 99.*		
COOKIE SIT-STAY "Glue" leash hand to hip, touch treat to dog's nose, and toss it beyond dog's reach. Cue *sit* (then mark). Then send to *take it*, mark, and praise. *Page 100.*		
SIT-STAY (ALTERNATIVE METHOD) Dog sits, touch treat to dog's nose, then hold between your eyes. Increase dog's focus on you. Increase time when successful. *Page 103.*		
OFF AND TAKE IT: PHASE 1 Hold six treats, shift one to fingers, say "take it." On fourth rep keep quiet: If dog tries to get it, say "off" sharply. As dog looks at you, say "take it." *Page 104.*		
RECALL AND SIT COMBO WITH RELEASE After each minute of supervised play, *recall* ("come here") and *sit* (mark, praise, touch collar, reward). *Release* to play again. *Page 98.*		
CATCH YOUR DOG DOING SOMETHING YOU LIKE Evaluate yourself. How well do you recognize and acknowledge your dog for offering behaviors without being asked? *Page 106.*		
POTTY TRAINING Keep track of input (meals and treats) and output (potty time). Note accidents. *Page 50.*		
BASELINE BEHAVIORS Hand-feeding; crate training; bite inhibition, handling, and gentling. *Pages 47, 53, 59.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 109.*		

day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	NOTES

From *Training the Best Dog Ever*

WEEK FOUR

See the Fundamentals Program Week Four (Chapter Seven, page 111) for review.

	day 1	day 2
RECALLS: ADD DISTRACTIONS AND DISTANCE Generalize to outdoor locations. With training partner's help, practice the Runaway and Lassie Recall exercise. *Page 113.*		
STAY UNTIL RECALLED: ADD DISTANCE, DURATION, AND DISTRACTIONS Add steps and time gradually, generalize to new locations. Circle around dog as he sits and stays. *Page 114.*		
DOWN: NAMING THE BEHAVIOR Practice Puppy Pushups (*sit-down-sit*), adding verbal cues to hand signals. *Page 115.*		
STANDING POSE As dog sits at your side, lure forward so that he stands to follow treat. When fluent, add to Puppy Pushups sequence, and add verbal cue ("pose"). *Page 115.*		
OFF AND TAKE IT TRADES: PHASE 2 Practice trades for items of equal or greater value. Trade special treats for portions of meal in food bowl. *Page 117.*		
CLIMBING STAIRS Cue a *sit*. Step and block dog with your leg. Mark, praise, and reward each step. Sit and praise at the end. *Page 120.*		
DOOR TRAINING Cue a *sit*, then say "off" before you open door and lead through with hand signal. Then mark, praise, reward. Later, add verbal cue "let's go." *Page 122.*		
SETTLE DOWN From *down-stay* position, offer treats one by one (vending machine technique). When dog relaxes, say "good settle." Also, hand-feed in *settle* position. *Page 125.*		
CATCH YOUR DOG DOING SOMETHING YOU LIKE Also, use Real-Life Rewards System. *Page 106.*		
POTTY TRAINING Keep track of input (meals and treats) and output (potty time). Note accidents. *Page 50.*		
BASELINE BEHAVIORS Hand-feeding; crate training; bite inhibition, handling, and gentling. *Pages 47, 53, 59.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 127.*		

WEEK FOUR

day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	NOTES

From *Training the Best Dog Ever*

WEEK FIVE

See the Fundamentals Program Week Five (Chapter Eight, page 129) for review.

	day 1	day 2
SIT **1.** Lure with a treat to a *sit*. *Page 131.* **2.** Hand signal without a treat. *Page 131.* **3.** Sit in public at three random moments. *Page 131.*		
RECALL AND RELEASE **1.** Luring *recall*. *Page 132.* **2.** *Recall* with verbal cue. *Release*. *Pages 132, 137.* **3.** *Recall-sit* combination during play. *Page 132.*		
LEASH WALKING **1.** Tethering exercise. *Page 133.* **2.** Walking exercise: change direction. *Page 133.* **3.** Walking exercise: informal heeling. *Page 133.*		
DOWN **1.** Luring to a *down*. *Page 134.* **2.** Puppy Pushups. *Page 134.* **3.** *Down* and *sit* at a distance with verbal cues. *Page 134.*		
STAY **1.** *Cookie sit and take it*. *Page 134.* **2.** *Cookie sit-stay*. *Page 135.* **3.** Conventional *stay* cue for 30 seconds. *Page 135.*		
STANDING POSE **1.** Luring to a *stand* from *sit*. *Page 135.* **2.** Stand visual cue without treat. *Page 135.* **3.** Puppy Pushups: add *stand* verbal cue. *Page 136.*		
SETTLE DOWN **1.** Human vending machine. *Page 136.* **2.** *Settle* visual and verbal cue. *Page 136.* **3.** Real-life *settle* at three random moments. *Page 137.*		
OFF AND TAKE IT TRADES **1.** *Cookie sit-stay*. *Page 137.* **2.** Phase 1 trade. *Page 137.* **3.** Phase 2 trade (food bowl). *Page 137.*		
BOUNDARY TRAINING **1.** Interior doors. *Page 138.* **2.** Visitor. *Page 138.* **3.** Climbing stairs or steps on cue. *Page 138.*		
GAMES AND SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES *Page 141.*		

WEEK FIVE

day 3	day 4	day 5	day 6	day 7	NOTES

From *Training the Best Dog Ever*

Your Dog's Diploma

THE BEST DOG EVER

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT

(your dog's name)

has successfully completed the

Training the Best Dog Ever Five-Week Fundamentals Program

- Mastering the 10 Basic Training Skills
- Demonstrating Good Socialization
- Displaying Signs of Being a Happy, Spirited Dog

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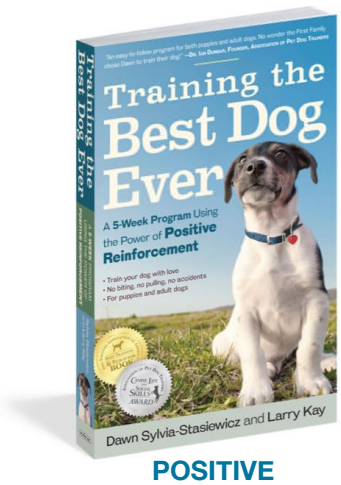
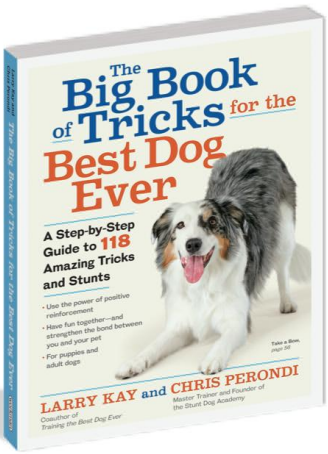
ABOUT POSITIVELY WOOF

Founded in 2013 by best-selling author and award-winning dog filmmaker Larry Kay, Positively Woof has become a community of 1.9 million Facebook followers who love dogs, alongside a website with 500 original articles, videos, and eBooks.

Under Larry's creative direction, P-Woof focuses on four cornerstones of content: dog training, dog tricks, dog rescue and celebrating our human-animal bond.



POSITIVE DOG TRAINING



DOG TRICKS

P-WOOF COMMUNITY
4
CORNERSTONES

DOG RESCUE PARTNERSHIPS

CELEBRATING OUR BOND

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Before becoming the dog trainer to President Obama's family, **Dawn Sylvia-Stasiewicz** trained each of Senator Ted Kennedy's Portuguese Water Dogs. Sylvia-Stasiewicz, who was a professional dog trainer in the Washington, D.C./Northern Virginia area for more than 20 years, ran popular Merit Puppy dog training classes, training and boarding animals for the Washington elite. She brought a mom's approach to training, basing her work on theories of positive reinforcement. She died unexpectedly in early 2011.

Los Angeles–based award-winning filmmaker and author **Larry Kay** makes wildly creative projects with dogs. His award-winning books include top-sellers *Training the Best Dog Ever* and *The Big Book of Tricks for the Best Dog Ever*. Larry's videos have been viewed more than 100 million times by his 1.9 million loyal Facebook followers at Positively Woof. Whether on live TV, performing in live shows, or delivering a conference keynote speech, Larry delights audiences while demystifying dog training, dog tricks and moviemaking, especially with shelter dogs. Visit www.LarryKay.com

Their book *Training the Best Dog Ever* has sold more than 200,000 copies. It was awarded the first-ever CLASS book award from the Association of Professional Dog Trainers and the Maxwell Medallion for Best Training and Behavior Book from the Dog Writers Association of America. Their book has also been published in Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Chinese and Russian editions.

NOTES