

BONDING

Whether your pet is a puppy or an adult dog, each activity the two of you share builds and strengthens your bond.

- Stroking, patting and gently grooming all comfort and please your dog.
- Appropriate play allows you to share your dog's natural joy in movement and games.
- Time spent in agility training and obedience work enhances your relationship while allowing your dog to gain confidence as he successfully completes tasks and earns your approval as well as the occasional treat.
- Make sure that the sessions are no longer than the dog's attention span and that they always end on an up note with the dog successfully completing a command and winning praise.

Dogs understand and learn from the consequences that follow their actions. By rewarding good behavior with praise, attention and honestly given rewards, you reinforce both the behavior and the bond between you and contribute to your dog's sense of confidence and his place in the family structure. If the dog's behavior is unacceptable, make this clear in a firm, negative tone of voice. Intimidation, cruelty or any attempt to hurt or harm your dog betrays his trust, damages the bond you share and can lead him to be fearful.

Dogs come to us with a natural sense of order and a willingness to acknowledge humans as top dog. In response, we need to reinforce our position by confident and consistent leadership and guidance. Understanding your dog's worldview and being a firm and consistent leader will allow him to grow to his full canine potential and permit the bond between you to continue to develop.

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