MaKs Dog Training

Connection - Not Correction

Every Dog Needs Training and Exercise

Small, medium, or large - size changes the plan, not whether they need it

The short version: Every dog - small, medium, and large - needs the same training, boundaries, and real exercise every day: walks, sniffing, play, and work for their brain, not just yard or lap time. Even small dogs need exercise. What we excuse in a little dog - barking, jumping, pulling, lunging - is still behaviour they are learning.

Appropriate training - for every size

- **Teach the basics:** name and come when called, sit, down, stay, leave it, loose-leash walking, and settling calmly on a bed - the same skills for small, medium, and large dogs.
- **Reward what you like:** calm praise and a treat for calm behaviour, checking in with you, and walking nicely - kept short, easy, and positive.
- **Same rules, every time:** if it would not be okay from a large dog, do not encourage it from a small one. Consistency is what makes it click.
- **Let them use their feet:** every dog should walk, sniff, and explore on the ground - small dogs included, not carried past everything.
- **Practice handling and greetings:** calm hellos, gentle handling of paws and collar, and space to walk away.

Small-dog traps to avoid

- **Carrying everywhere** - a dog who never walks on their own misses exercise, sniffing, and confidence, and can become fearful on the ground.
- **Laughing off problem behaviour** - barking at everyone, jumping up, nipping, and guarding a lap are not cute; rewarded or ignored, they grow.
- **Picking them up to end a moment** - scooping a dog up mid-bark or mid-greeting can raise fear and reactivity instead of teaching calm.
- **Skipping leash training** - pulling and lunging are easier to hold back in a small dog, but they are still stressful for the dog and for you.
- **No socialisation** - small dogs need the same calm, positive exposure to people, dogs, and places.

Exercise for every size - small dogs included

Move their body

- **Real walks, every day:** small, medium, and large dogs all need daily walks plus play - not just a yard break. Even small dogs: many, like terriers, were bred to work and run.
- **Scale it to your dog:** larger, younger dogs usually need more distance; smaller dogs may do it in shorter outings - but no size needs none.
- **The yard is not a walk:** for any size, new smells, sights, and ground to cover tire a dog out and keep them confident.
- **Let them sniff, build up gradually:** sniffing is exercise for every dog. Add distance a little at a time; adjust for puppies, seniors, and weather.

Work their brain

- **Training is exercise:** short sessions make any dog - small, medium, or large - think, move, and settle.
- **Sniff and search games:** scatter treats in the grass, hide a favourite toy, or use a snuffle mat or puzzle feeder.
- **Play and chew:** tug, fetch in a safe space, and safe chews give energy a good outlet indoors too.
- **Too little shows up as trouble:** barking, chewing, digging, racing around at night, and not settling often mean a bored, under-exercised dog - not a bad one.

A good day for every dog

- **Mix it up:** walks and sniffing, play, short training, and plenty of rest - every size needs sleep, too.
- **Feed meals during training:** use part of their regular food for training, so exercise for the brain is built into the day without extra treats on top.
- **Keep it safe for their size:** a well-fitted harness for every dog; small dogs - care with stairs, jumping, heat and cold; larger dogs - care for joints.

General information only - please talk to your vet first: This handout is general information only. It is not veterinary or behaviour advice and is not a note from a vet. The right amount of exercise depends on your dog's breed, age, and health - please ask your veterinarian, especially for a puppy, a senior dog, or a dog with joint, heart, breathing, or back problems. If fear, barking, or aggression is not easing, get help from a professional trainer early.

MaKs Dog Training - Private, Individualized In-Home Dog Training
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