



# All Dawgs Training Services

*"Where training gets personal!"*

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## Is My Dog Stubborn?

By Diane Blackman, CPDT-KA

Trainers hear "my dog is stubborn," all the time. However, if you take a look at what is really going on, we will realize that dogs aren't really stubborn at all. Actually, a dog, technically, isn't capable of being "stubborn." Dogs are present-tense animals. They do not worry about the future and are not concerned about the past. This makes them incapable of stubbornness or spite.

The truth is, we as their owners, are actually rewarding "stubborn" behavior. Let us take the sit command for example. You tell the dog to sit and the dog stares up at you. You reach in your pocket and grab a treat and tell the dog to sit again. This time, the dog complies. What you have taught is that if the dog waits long enough, the treats will reappear. You have actually taught your dog his "stubbornness."

So what's an owner to do? Here are a couple of tips to keep "stubbornness" at bay:

- 1) Be observant. Dog training is actually 90% observation. Dogs are very cause and effect. Pay attention to what you did and what the dog did in response. If you like the response, do it again. If you do not like it, be sure not to repeat it.
- 2) Once the dog shows you he can do a command, let that be your standard. For example, if you tell your dog to sit without having to lure him with a treat, do not go back to luring future commands to sit.
- 3) If you have trouble remembering what happened in yesterday's training session with your dog, use a training log. All Dawgs Training Services' has a training log for your use as part of our Free Resources on our website.
- 4) Get compliance. If your dog knows a command and does not comply, help him. Use your treat (but do not give it to him) to lure him into position or gently guide him by the collar. Note, do not "fake him out" too much or he will stop following the treat.
- 5) Be patient. Another way to get compliance is by waiting to see if he will do it if given enough time. Wait no more than about 10 to 15 seconds though.
- 6) Understand the difference between effort and non-effort errors. Some dogs that appear stubborn are actually trying, albeit unsuccessfully, to figure out what you want. Learn to recognize the difference when he is trying and when he is distracted or blowing you off.

We want to think that our dogs are wonderful animals – and they are! We just need to be careful of what is happening on OUR end of the leash.

Need more help? Contact us to schedule a private lesson or enroll in one of our great group classes. We will help you train your dog and remove words such as "stubborn" or "willful" out of your vocabulary when speaking about your dog!

About the Author: Diane Blackman, CPDT-KA is a certified professional dog trainer who has been training for over 15 years. She has raised six dogs and currently shares her life with three golden retrievers and a mixed breed.

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