

Obedience Training Strengthens Bond Between Dog & Owner

An obedient dog is an asset. An untrained dog may be a liability! Parlour trick commands such as "speak", "roll over", "shake" may result in cute behaviour but they do not fall into the category of "obedience" and can rarely serve the dog and owner in a serious situation.

An obedience trained dog makes a conscious decision not to jump on your visitors because you have taught him that this is not acceptable. A dog with good manners is a pleasure to own and a pleasure

to be around.

Among important commands for your dog to master are heel, sit, stay, stand for examination, down—stay, and most critical is "come". These commands not only assist you in controlling your dog, they can save his life! If a dog is running towards you to play and you tell him "down—stay" because you see a car coming along a road that is between you and him, you can save his life. If he comes when you call, it can save his life. These are important skills.

When you enroll in an obedience class, it is only the beginning. Training should last the life span of the dog. If you stop practicing your dog, you may find that he stops listening to you. Training a dog is no more permanent than a healthclub membership for you! If you stop doing what you learned to do there, you will lose it! You can practice with your dog on your daily walk. Use a variety of rewards such as treats, praise or petting. And there is no such thing as a dog that can't be trained.



A good instructor will help bridge communication gaps between you and your dog.

This article is contributed by **DAVE McMahon** of **McMahon Dog Training Academy** in **Niagara Falls**.