

ACADEMY OF CANINE BEHAVIOR

WHAT DO DOGS LOOK FOR IN LEADERS???

The American Heritage Dictionary offers the following definitions: “LEADER - One that leads or guides; one who is in charge or in command of others; one which has influence or power. LEADING: Having a position in the lead; foremost.” So, if you have a really smart dog, hand him the dictionary and have him look up the words! Then all you have to do is tell him you are the leader. If you are not fortunate enough to have a dog that reads, the following are some “doggie” ways of looking at leaders!

1. **LEADERS LEAD!**
 - Do you go through doors first?
 - Do you get into and out of the car first?
 - Do you follow your dog on walks, or does your dog follow you?
2. **LEADERS EAT FIRST!**
 - Do you fix your dog’s dinner and feed him before you sit down to eat?
 - While you are eating do you stop to offer the dog a “treat” from the table?
3. **LEADERS DON’T CHASE!**
 - Does your dog like to turn a game of fetch into a game of keep-away?
 - Does your dog steal things? Do you have to chase him to get it back?
4. **LEADERS INITIATE INTERACTIONS!**
 - When your dog brings you the ball, do you usually throw it for him?
 - When your dog bumps your hand, do you usually pet him?
 - When petting your dog, do you stop when you want, or does the dog walk away on his own?
 - Can you groom your dog whenever you want to, including toenail trimming and ear cleaning?
5. **LEADERS MARK THEIR TERRITORY!**
 - When out walking your dog, do you follow him round when he urinates?
 - Do you go around the backyard wetting over all the places your dog has urinated?
6. **LEADERS SLEEP IN HIGHER PLACES!**
 - Does your dog sleep in your bed or on your couch?
 - Does your dog sleep in your lap?
7. **LEADERS HAVE THEIR SPACE!**
 - When your dog is sleeping on the floor, do you carefully move around him?
 - When your dog is sleeping on the couch, do you carefully sit beside him?
 - When your dog is in your bed, do you carefully get in so as not to disturb him?
8. **LEADERS MAINTAIN DOMINANT POSTURE!**
 - When you are sitting on the floor, does your dog come and stand over you?
 - Does your dog put his paws on your feet, or sit on your feet?
 - Does your dog think it is okay to ever put his mouth or teeth on you (even in play)?
9. **THE LEADER’S JOB IS TO PROTECT THE PACK!**
 - Does your dog feel safe when he is with you?
 - Does your dog overreact in a strange situation, or, if a stranger approaches?
 - Does your dog bark at people or other dogs and won’t stop when you tell him to?
 - Can you discipline your dog if he’s done something wrong?
10. **LEADERS ARE CALM, IN CONTROL, AND CONFIDENT!**
 - Do you stay calm when your dog is doing something wrong?
 - Do you get nervous when a large dog approaches?
 - Do you start yelling at the dog if he is barking?
 - Do you play tug-of-war with your dog....and win?
 - Are you consistent in your expectations so the dog can figure out what you want?

ARE YOU A GOOD LEADER FOR YOUR DOG????