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- Dog Training
- Behavior Consults
- Specializing in Separation Anxiety

Dog Training & Behavior Consulting

## Train Your Dog to Exit Doors Politely

Does your dog attempt to rush out the door every time it opens? If so, this is a danger to both you and your dog. But don't despair, there is a training solution. All you need to do is to convince your dog that rushing the door will never succeed in getting her out the door to freedom, and that another polite behavior, such as sitting at the door and waiting for permission, works to get her out the door.

### Prerequisites for the Training

- Your dog will need to know how to sit reliably when asked.
- You will need to have a training relationship established with your dog that is built on mutual trust, cooperation, and respect.
- You will need to know what type of treats or rewards your dog values highly.
- You will need a leash and a lot of patience and determination.

### Manage the Behavior!

The first thing you need to do is to implement a management program that prevents your dog from being successful in rushing out the door. Every time your dog succeeds in escaping out the door, your dog is highly rewarded with freedom and fun. That is a HUGE reason for your dog to escape out the door! So unless you are prepared to engage in the training, you need to prevent your dog from the possibility of escaping out the door. Management can be implemented in different ways depending on your home's floor plan.

- Baby gates can be used close to the door if you have a hallway that leads to the doorway.
- Crates can be used to confine your dog at times when you know you are going out the door or inviting guests in to your home.
- A tether station can be used instead of a crate; in fact, a tether station in the room where the door is will probably serve to facilitate the training.
- Keeping a leash by the door and placing your dog on leash every time the door needs to open is another easy to implement management solution.
- If none of the above solutions work for you, then take your dog to another room and close the door to that room to prevent your dog from escaping out the door when you need to go outside or get guests inside.

### Train a New Behavior: Silence Is Golden

Before you begin, make sure that your dog will sit reliably when politely requested. If not, practice more until your dog masters the sit. If your dog sits well when requested, begin the training program below. You will need a leash and a supply of high value treats. You need to use treats that your dog highly values, not what you consider to be of high value.

The initial training will be done in silence until your dog is successful in exiting the door politely with your permission. It is important for your dog to figure out for herself that sitting politely and waiting for permission is the fastest and best way to get out the door.

- Start in a room away from the door to the outside.
- Put your dog on leash. ***Make sure that your dog can't slip out of her collar or harness!***
- Take your dog on leash to the front door and give your dog the hand signal for sit. Give the hand signal only once. Give her ample time to decide to sit. To increase the chance that she will sit, place your foot on the leash giving her only enough room to sit, stand, or lay down. You are still holding the end of the leash in your hand.
- When she sits, give her a treat.
- Open the door to let her out.
- If your dog rushes towards the door and you can safely slam the door shut, do so. This will make it very clear to your dog that rushing towards the door does not work. Do not say a word to your dog. Just close the door, take her off leash, and go sit down and relax or go about your household chores. Try again in about 10 minutes.
- If your dog is faster than you are (and most dogs are faster than humans) and succeeds in rushing out the door, keep a good hold on the leash and let the door close on the leash leaving your dog outside while you are still on the inside holding the end of the leash.
- Don't say a word!! This is very important. Your dog needs to figure out for herself that rushing out the door does not lead to freedom.
- Wait until she gets tired of waiting just outside the door.
- Bring her back inside without saying a word. Begin the exercise again by giving the hand signal for sit.
- Repeat the exercise until she no longer rushes out the door. Eventually she will stop rushing out the door, because it will get very boring being leashed a foot or two outside the door with you on the other side holding the leash and then having to come back inside. There is no way she can have fun that way.
- When your dog can manage to sit and you can get the door open without her attempting to rush out the door, give your dog permission to go out the door. Release her from the sit with a release word like "Ok," "Free," "At Ease," or some other word that you will only use to release your dog from a position. Go out the door with her and shower her with high-value treats and praise. Then, you can take her to her tie out, take her for a walk, or let her off leash if you have a fenced in yard. This will teach her that waiting politely at the door for permission is the best and only way to get outside for some fun.
- Gradually increase the time your dog sits politely and waits for the door to open.
- When your dog is reliably waiting politely at the door for permission to exit, you can switch to using the verbal signal for sit instead of the hand signal if you desire.
- You should also be working on stay during other times that you train. When your dog understands stay, then you can add that to your door-training plan.

With consistent effort in following the training plan, your dog will learn to exit doors politely with permission, and most importantly, both you and your dog will be happier and safer!