

HOUSEBREAKING & TRAINING YOUR PUPPY

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Excerpted from *Your Puppy, Your Dog*, by Pat Storer



A Storey Country Wisdom Bulletin

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The Basic Nature of a Dog: Leader or Follower?

Dogs are pack animals and by nature need to live in a group situation. A dog's position in the pack can be at only one of two levels: the leader or a follower. Except for very rare individuals, dogs really don't care if they're the top dog or not, but they do need to know what their position is at all times. It doesn't take a puppy very long to accept its new human family as its pack. The real question is, will he be a leader or a follower?

If a dog isn't sure whether he's the leader or a follower, he will try to be the leader until you show him differently. Being the leader is a hard job for a dog. If you show him that you are in the number one position, your dog will easily accept being a follower. With that he gets the security of belonging to your pack.

Your Role as Leader

You must be the leader, but you cannot lead with cruelty. You must be firm but fair, understanding and respecting your dog's natural instincts. You must not permit misbehavior, but you also must never be abusive. A dog that is full of fear is unstable and unpredictable and therefore not a good companion.

It will be your goal to direct your dog so that she understands and learns what is acceptable behavior. She can do this only if your training is clear, consistent, and properly timed.

Remember that you should never get angry at your dog, yell, repeat a command over and over, or hit or handle her roughly. You will gain nothing except your dog's mistrust.





A Dog's Senses

In order to do a good job of training your dog, it's important for you to understand how a dog experiences his world and what makes a dog "tick." A dog has the same senses as a human, but they are different in several ways.

Your Dog's Instincts

An *instinct* is a behavior pattern that is inherited and not learned. An example is suckling. All mammals are born with the instinct to nurse. They don't have to be taught to do it. Dogs — including your puppy or dog — have inherited strong instincts from their wild ancestors. You may see your dog exhibiting any of the following common instincts.

- **Guarding:** Your dog may guard your yard, your home, or a favorite toy.
- **Pack instinct:** This is the instinct to group together. If your dog is with several other dogs, he will have the instinct to behave as if he's a member of a pack.
- **Prey drive:** Prey drive is the instinct to chase a moving object. In the wild, dogs displayed this instinct when they hunted. Herding, driving, and chasing are all parts of prey drive.
- **Digging, barking, and marking:** These are all natural behaviors of dogs and are familiar to most dog owners.

Smell

Your dog lives in a world rich with a multitude of scents that we cannot even imagine. The part of her brain that receives messages about scents is over 1,000 times larger than ours. Not only can a dog tell the difference among hundreds and hundreds of smells, but she can also remember them. In addition, a dog's sense of smell is so finely tuned that she's able to notice a very small amount of a particular odor, even if there are many other odors present. For example, your dog is able to pick out your scent on the one object you've touched from all of the others in a pile of identical objects.

Hearing

The dog can hear all of the frequencies that a human can hear — and well beyond. As you will have noticed if you've ever owned a dog before, dogs are able to move their ears in the direction of the sounds they hear. They tune in to different things in sound than humans do.

Sight

The dog's sense of sight is sharp when it comes to viewing familiar shapes and moving objects. His ability to distinguish fine details is not as well developed as that of humans, though. A dog is not good at picking out differences in movement or shape, for example. I've tried walking past dogs that knew me with a limping gait or my hair in a much different style, and they have always acted as if they didn't recognize me until I spoke or they could catch my scent.

Earning Your Puppy's Respect, Trust, and Confidence

Your dog needs a leader, and that's you. A puppy must learn self-control and self-discipline. He will learn this as you help him to be obedient. The puppy needs lots of affection, but you must not let him have his way when what he's doing isn't right. He will learn to follow your guidance because he wants to be obedient. You teach your puppy obedience by repeating the same thing over and over and giving praise when he gets it right.

Be Consistent and Firm

Decide what behaviors you will allow and what you won't allow from your puppy. The best way to correct a problem behavior is to prevent it in the first place. Don't put your puppy on your lap while you're on the couch if you don't want him to get on the couch as an adult. Never give the puppy a command that you can't or don't enforce. An example is telling a dog "Down" when he jumps on you. Are you going to squat down and put the dog in a down position? Does your dog know the word *down* yet? Is "down" what you really mean, or do you mean "off"? The main thing to remember is that you're trying to communicate with your dog and teach him that you don't want him jumping on you. A better solution would be to say "Off," take the dog's feet and remove them from you, and praise him when his feet are on the ground.

Getting the Message Across

Your dog is a thinking creature, but she doesn't think with words the way you do. In order for a dog to understand us, we have to get a message to her in a language she will understand. We do that by showing her what we want her to do, praising her when she does it right, and correcting her when she does something we don't want her to do.

There are certain dos and don'ts we must remember when living with a dog:

- Praise your dog when she does something you've asked her to do and does it right. Remember to give praise only when the dog earns it.
- Use treats only for training.
- Don't let your dog be confused about who's top dog. For example, don't let your dog go in or out of a door ahead of you or without your permission.
- Don't lose control and get angry or rough with your dog.
- Don't play dominance games such as tug-of-war with your dog. This puts you and the dog on the same level and encourages aggression.

Leash Training

You will need to train your puppy to walk with a leash attached to his collar as soon as possible, so that you can take him to relieve himself. Start out with a soft buckle collar. Let the puppy get used to the feel of it.

Next, attach a short leash to the collar, and let the puppy get used to dragging it around. You must always be within sight of the puppy when he's dragging a leash, because it might get caught and tangled. You can play with the puppy while he drags the leash by putting a little tension on its end.

Now pick up the leash and follow the puppy. If the puppy is obstinate, show him a treat and put light pressure on the leash as you try to guide the puppy to walk on your left side. If he does a good job, reward him with a treat. Don't drag, choke, or force the puppy into perfect position. All you want at this stage is for the puppy to get used to being restrained with the leash. Once he is, you can use the leash whenever you work with your puppy.

Using the Proper Leash and Collar

A soft nylon buckle collar and leash are all you will need in the way of equipment to start out training your puppy. You will add a chain slip collar later, when you begin obedience training.



slip collar



buckle collar

The slip collar on the left is safe and useful only when it is properly placed on your dog, as shown in this drawing. Use it only when you are present, your dog is on a leash, and you are holding the leash. The buckle collar on the right is a good choice for everyday wear. Your dog's rabies and/or identification tags can be attached to the ring.

Crate Training

Wild dogs want to keep their dens clean, so they pick toilet areas away from where they live and sleep. Domestic dogs have inherited this instinct from their wild ancestors. To housebreak your puppy, all you need to do is to reinforce this natural behavior. Housebreaking and crate training go together. The crate becomes your dog's "den." That's why crate-training your dog will help in housebreaking him. When you have unruly visitors, his crate is the one place your dog can go (or you can put him) for privacy. Very small children may unintentionally injure or irritate your dog by pulling his hair, tail, or ears. They can walk over his feet and tail, try to climb on his back, and throw objects at him. Your dog has the right to be treated with respect, so the crate is the perfect place for him while they visit.

Crate training is a method of giving your dog a place of his own to sleep, gnaw on a chewable treat, or just get some privacy. The crate feels very much like a den to your dog. When you're going to take your dog with you in a car or truck, or even if you go on vacation, you can take along his crate and he will feel right at home, anywhere.

The Right-Size Crate

Choose a crate that's large enough for your puppy to enter, turn around in, and lie down in comfortably. The first crate for your pup should be just a tiny bit larger than he is. If the crate is too large, your puppy can divide it into a sleeping area and a potty area. When your puppy is reliably house trained, he's ready for a larger crate. Eventually you will need a crate big enough to accommodate the full-grown dog.

The Right Location

Pick a spot that will belong to your dog. That's where you'll place her crate. The spot you choose should be in a relatively quiet place where the dog can go to rest. There should be good circulation of air around the crate, but it

shouldn't be in the direct path of a heating or air-conditioning vent. The sun shouldn't shine directly on the crate, or the inside could get very hot.

Step-by-Step Crate Training

Step 1. The first few times you work on crate training, your pup should be a little bit hungry. Place a light-colored towel in the crate. Pick a word you will always use when you're going to put the puppy in the crate: *crate*, *kennel*, *pickles* ... any word will do. Whatever the word is, your dog will soon understand that it means "Go get in your crate." Eventually, you can use that word to tell the dog, from anywhere in the house, to go to her crate — and she will!

Step 2. Show the puppy a food treat, making sure she's really paying attention. Kneel down on the floor in front of the open crate and hold her buckle collar with one hand. Show the treat again, then toss it into the crate. Give your "get-in-the-crate" word. The dog will run into the crate to get the treat.

Step 3. Close the door, but leave it closed only for a minute or so. Don't overdo the length of time. If the dog is quiet, give her praise. Don't open the door if your puppy starts pawing or whining. Open the door only when she stops whining or pawing. Opening at the wrong time will reinforce the behavior you don't want.

Step 4. Let the puppy out, and with another treat repeat the exercise. Over a period of a week or so, increase the time she stays in the crate.

MAXIMUM "CRATE TIME" FOR DIFFERENT AGES

Puppy's Age Maximum Time in the Crate

8 weeks	3 hours
12 weeks	4 hours
16 weeks	5 hours
6 months	7 hours

Puppy's Age Maximum Time in the Crate

1 year

8 hours

Note: Just because your dog is able to stay in his crate for a longer period of time than what's recommended doesn't mean you should keep him in the crate that long.

Crate Training Dos and Don'ts

Never use the crate as punishment. If you're angry at your dog and want to banish her, calmly put her in the crate, without scolding her. If you scold your dog as you're putting her in the crate, she may become confused. She may think the crate is for jail time and learn to dislike it, or she may think you're scolding her for going into the crate.

Don't feed your dog in the crate. You can put water in the crate during the day if you must keep the dog confined there for more than a couple of hours.

Be sure the crate is in an area where there's good ventilation. Some short-faced breeds (Chow, Pug, and Boston Terrier, for example) or those with heavy coats (such as the Malamute) need extra holes drilled in plastic crates so that air will circulate properly.

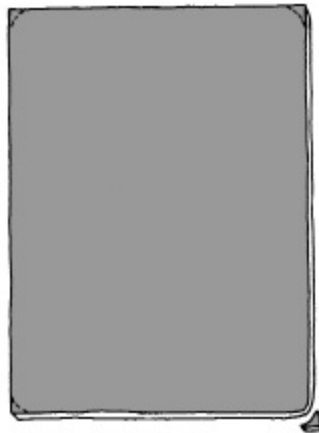
Making a Crate Mat

Here's how to make a mat for your dog's crate so it will be more comfortable for sleeping. For the cover, choose material that is both durable and washable. Canvas, denim, terry cloth, and even fake sheepskin work well. Wash the fabric and dry it in the clothes dryer on "High." If the fabric is going to shrink, this will take care of it.

You will need:

- A piece of ¼-inch (6 mm) exterior masonite at least as large as the bottom of the crate.
- Two rectangular pieces of fabric at least 12 inches (30 cm) longer on a side than the bottom of the crate.
- Scissors

- Pinking shears (optional)
- Measuring tape or ruler
- Pencil or marker
- Straight pins
- Cardboard
- Strong thread



Step 2: Cut the masonite to size and round off the corners.

Make the Mat

- 1.** Measure the inside bottom of the crate.
- 2.** Cut the masonite to the size of your measurements, and round off the corners as shown in the drawing.
- 3.** Place the masonite in the crate to make sure it fits. If it doesn't, trim it so that it does fit.

Make the Cover

- 4.** Add 12 inches (30 cm) to the length and width of your measurements for the bottom of the crate. If the crate measures 20 inches by 27 inches (51 cm × 68 cm), the new measurements will be 32 inches by 39 inches (81 cm × 99 cm).

5. Cut two pieces of material to the measurements described above: the size of the bottom of the crate, plus 12 inches (30 cm) longer and wider. Try to use the selvages wherever possible to prevent raveling. Cut all other edges with pinking shears to prevent fraying during washing and drying.

6. On each piece of material, measure down $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches (30 cm) from one corner and mark that place with a straight pin. On the diagram, that place is labeled A.

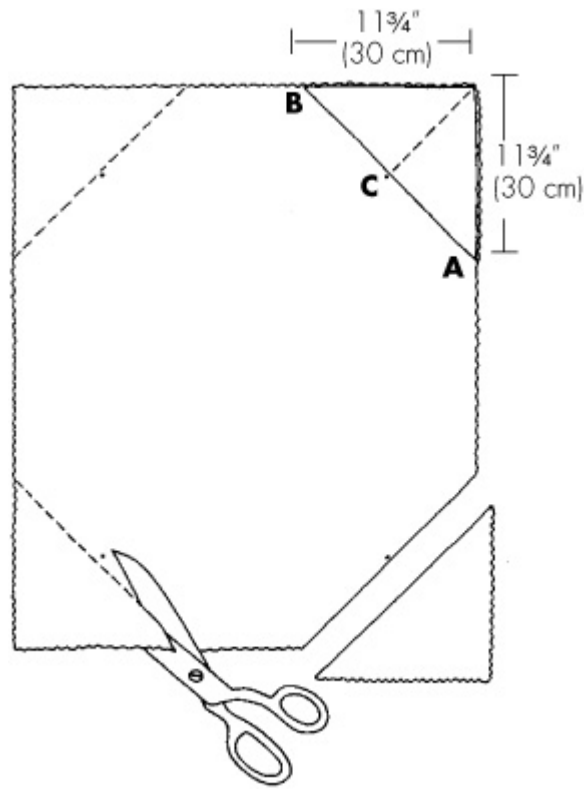
7. Measure $11\frac{3}{4}$ inches (30 cm) across the top from that corner and mark the place with a straight pin. On the diagram, that place is labeled B.

8. Using a pencil or marker, draw a straight line from A to B, forming a triangle. Cut a piece of cardboard to exactly fit that triangle.

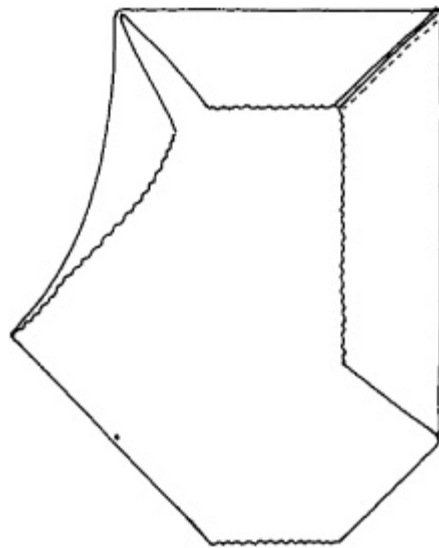
9. Keeping the cardboard in place in the corner of the fabric, fold it in half to find the middle of the line that forms the bottom of the triangle. Make a mark at this place, which is labeled C in the drawing.

10. Cut off each corner of the material; make the cuts along the line from A to B.

11. Lay the material down flat with the right (outside) up. On one corner and one side, fold over the A and B flaps so that their edges meet. Smooth out the material so there is a flat seam from the place where A and B meet to C. Sew this seam, reinforcing both the beginning and the end of the seam with backstitching. That corner is done!



Steps 9 and 10: Measure, mark, and cut off each corner.

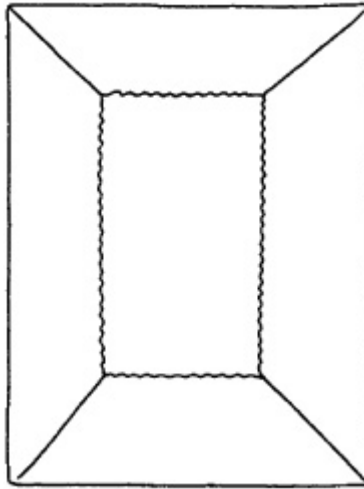


Step 11: Fold over the flaps and sew the seams.

12. Repeat step 11 for each of the other three corners.

13. Turn the material inside out and fit the masonite into the cover, bending the masonite slightly as you slip it into the corner at the bottom and then the top of the cover.

14. Make the second cover following the same steps, and you have a spare!



Step 13: Turn the material inside out and slip in the masonite.

Housebreaking

The more time you spend with your new puppy or dog, the faster she will learn not to urinate or defecate in the house. A puppy is just a baby and must learn what you expect of her. An older dog may have to learn new habits, depending upon how she was housed and trained before.

What Doesn't Work

You have probably heard someone say, “If the puppy makes a mistake, rub his nose in it,” or, “Drag him to the site of the disaster, point at the puddle or pile, and scold him.” Don’t use either of those methods. They don’t work. All you’ll do is frighten the pup and make a mess for yourself to clean up. A dog is so upset when he is being scolded that he can’t even begin to understand exactly what you’re angry about.

When a Mistake Happens

There’s often a reason why a housebroken dog makes a mistake. Maybe you changed her food. Maybe she’s sick. Maybe she ate something that she shouldn’t have, such as some toilet paper or a houseplant. Before you react in anger, try to figure out the cause!

What Does Work: 6 Simple Steps

Step 1. Watch for the signs. Be with your puppy as much as possible so that you can learn his different sounds and behaviors. You will soon notice that the puppy behaves in a certain way immediately before he begins to relieve himself — if you see your pup start to circle and sniff the floor, he’s almost certainly looking for a place to potty. Watch for this cue and use it to your benefit. You will have only a few seconds to get the puppy outside to the place you want him to use. Don’t scold him if you aren’t fast enough.

Step 2. Pick out a potty area. Pick a spot (in the yard or wherever you choose) that you want your puppy to use as his potty area. Place a piece or two of his stool in that spot. This will act as a cue to the pup. Take him to that spot immediately after eating. Praise him gently the instant he starts to relieve himself. The praise must be quiet and calm. You don't want to get the pup so excited that he forgets what he started to do. When he's finished relieving himself, shower him with praise and let him play for a few minutes in another area.

Step 3. Be patient. Don't play with your pup until he relieves himself. If he doesn't relieve himself within 10 minutes, put him in his crate and try the whole thing over again in 20 minutes or so.

Step 4. Keep the potty area clean. Clean up the area every day, leaving a small piece behind as a reminder for a few days. Once you're sure the pup thoroughly understands what the potty area is for, clean up the area completely each day.

Step 5. Maintain control. If your puppy is very small, you may have to carry him to the potty spot. Otherwise, try to take him out wearing a collar and leash. Never let the puppy follow you without any type of restraint. Keep a leash and collar by the door.

Step 6. Introduce the puppy to the house in small steps. Confine the pup to a single room at first, preferably one with a tile floor. Put a baby gate across the entrance, if possible. You must be able to observe the puppy when he's out of the crate, so don't lock him in the bathroom. The best time to allow the puppy freedom in this room is after he has properly relieved himself outdoors. When the puppy is reliable about staying in the crate, staying in the single room, and relieving himself when he's taken outside, you can gradually allow him more freedom in the house. Don't give the puppy too much freedom too fast. He may find a nook or cranny at the other end of the house that he considers a perfect spot to relieve himself. Go slowly with your puppy and you'll have a more reliable pet.

Playtime can follow any potty break or be part of free time.

6:30 — Upon awakening, potty break.

A.M.

7:00 — Breakfast, followed by potty break — put out water. Free time
A.M. in one room.

9:30 — Potty break. Nap in crate, followed by potty break.

A.M.

noon — Lunch, followed by potty break. Free time in one room.

2:30 — Potty break. Nap in crate, followed by potty break.

P.M.

6:00 — Supper, followed by potty break. Free time in one room.

P.M.

7:30 — Pick up water bowl until morning.

P.M.

9:00 — Potty break, followed by bedtime.

P.M.

Housebreaking Tips

Whenever your pup or dog is loose on the floor, spend as much time as you can with him. If he starts to relieve himself, lift him gently and carry him to the potty area. Don't yell at your dog, no matter what happens and no matter how much you have to clean up. Here are a few tips to keep your puppy on a fairly regular schedule:

- Feed only dry food until the puppy is house trained. Canned food has a high moisture content and added chemicals that can affect the frequency of your pup's urination.
- Feed on a regular schedule. Take the puppy out immediately after each meal.
- Watch for the puppy to awaken from a nap. Take him out right after a nap.

- Take the puppy out between meals and naps so that he doesn't go more than 2 hours without a potty break.
- Take the puppy out first thing in the morning and last thing at night.

Nighttime Potty Breaks

If you're very lucky, your pup will sleep through the night. But if she doesn't, she will need to be taken outside once during the night. This is a rough time for both of you. Your puppy needs to relieve herself during the night because her bladder isn't large enough for her to wait until morning. In a few weeks, this will pass.

If possible, don't wait until the puppy is whining continuously to be taken out. This could cause a whining problem you will have to correct later. Try to get up when you hear the puppy stirring restlessly and before she whines. Take her outside, on the leash and collar, straight to the potty spot. Don't act impatient or the puppy might think she's doing something wrong. If she relieves herself, praise her calmly. If she doesn't relieve herself within the normal length of time, take her back to her crate, put her inside, and go back to bed without a word.

No Nighttime Treats!

Never, ever play with the pup or give her any food or treats during this nighttime potty break. Resist any attention other than the praise. The pup must not think nighttime is a time for recreation and socializing.

Paper Training

Some people prefer to use the paper-training method of house training. This is convenient for apartment dwellers and for those with little access to an outside area. The puppy is confined to a small area in which the whole floor is covered with newspaper. This should be a noncarpeted area. Since the whole area is covered, the puppy will have no choice but to relieve himself on the paper.

After several days, begin removing some of the paper. The puppy has become used to the idea that he should relieve himself on the newspaper, and he won't eliminate on the area of the floor that's bare.

Eventually, you might use a large litter pan or plastic blanket box with a paper liner in the bottom. Once the puppy is dependably eliminating in the litter pan, you can gradually give him more access to the house. Some people don't use the litter-pan method, but without a litter pan, the dog may think any paper object on the floor is a fair target. I know one dog whose aim was so accurate that he used a *TV Guide* that was on the floor.



Paper training is often the only house-training alternative. Remember, though, that any newspaper or magazine lying on the floor could be a "target" for your dog.

Common Housebreaking Problems

Here are some common housebreaking problems, and suggestions for dealing with them.

Excited Urination

Dogs that are on the submissive side may squat or lie on their sides or backs and urinate when they get excited. This usually happens when they first see you or even a stranger. It's hard to believe, but this is a compliment from the dog. She's telling you that you're much higher on the ladder of importance than she is. She's also saying that you have her devotion and she will look to you for direction. Most dogs grow out of this, but occasionally a very submissive adult will continue this through her life. Sometimes it helps to teach the dog games, such as retrieving, that build self-confidence. The act of leaving you and going out after the toy is the key factor here. The dog is making a decision to leave your side and pursue an object she wants to catch.

Relieving Himself in the Crate

If your puppy or dog urinates or poops in his crate, here are some possible causes and suggested solutions:

- The crate is too large. Get a crate that's just slightly larger than the dog so that when he's lying down, he covers nearly all of the floor.
- The dog or puppy was previously kept in a crate, possibly with a wire bottom or papers in it, and expected to relieve himself without going for a walk or outside. If this is the case, begin to take the dog out for walks to the potty spot very frequently. Give extra praise when he relieves himself outside.
- You're leaving the dog in the crate too long. Get him on a shorter schedule.

- The puppy is sick. Your veterinarian might wish to check for urinary infections or disorders or an upset in the digestive system. There is a defect in some dogs that causes leakage of urine when the bladder gets partially full.
- The puppy or dog won't relieve himself in the potty area and then does relieve himself in his crate when you bring him in. Have you ever caught your dog in the act of relieving himself where he shouldn't have been doing so? Did you scold him? The puppy may think that you don't want him to relieve himself at all, so he waits until you're out of sight to do so.

Crate-Cleaning Tip

When you have to clean up a mess in the crate, wash it thoroughly with soap, then rinse with a mixture of 1 part white vinegar and 1 part water.

Marking

If your dog urinates on your bed, your dad's shoes, or your sister's umbrella, he's trying to let everyone know he's claiming that territory. This dog is confused about just who is in control in the house. You need to straighten him out. This rarely happens with a dog under 8 months of age, and nearly always happens with a male. Females may mark before, during, and after they come into their heat cycle, however.

If marking is caused by *hormones*, neutering or spaying the dog will usually cure the problem. I recommend neutering or spaying before the dog is sexually mature.

If marking is a *dominance* issue — the dog is confused about who is in charge — a few brush-up lessons on the leash will remind him that he is not the dominant member of the family. If he hasn't had basic obedience lessons, it's time to get started, right away. Either way, if you use a firm, fair hand in training, the dog will normally stop the behavior. This also works

on males in some toy breeds that are notorious for marking if they are not neutered.

Basic Obedience Training

If at all possible, enroll your puppy or dog in an obedience class. Training should be a happy time for both you and your dog. If your dog is treated harshly, she will be afraid or will resent the training sessions. Your dog must eventually understand that she must mind you. Most dogs are followers looking for someone to lead them. Your dog will learn to respect you by the way you treat her and the way you reward her when she has done something that you like.

Sometimes you can unintentionally reinforce undesirable behavior in a dog by saying something in the wrong tone of voice. If the meter reader comes up to the fence and your dog is barking and barking up a storm, and you say — in a nice tone of voice — “Now, that’s okay, he’s a friend,” what your dog is hearing is, “It’s good that you’re barking. You should always bark at that person.” If you want the dog to stop doing something, you must always get her attention first, by calling her name. Then tell her that you don’t like what she’s doing. Be as simple as possible, with something like: “Sandy, no bark.” What the dog understands is, “I don’t like what you are doing. Don’t do it.” A simple “Good dog” in a voice that’s pleasant is sufficient to let the dog know she has done something that has pleased you.

There are countless methods for teaching a dog obedience. The method I’ll describe here is the most pleasant for both trainer and dog. You will use treats as rewards at first, but eventually you will get the response you want from your dog for praise alone. Your goal is for your dog to work for praise and loving. She will soon learn when you’re getting ready to teach her something new.

For the sake of description, I’ve named the imaginary dog in the next section Maple.

Attention

Before you can get your dog to learn something new, he must be paying attention to you. To get your dog’s attention in early training, you must make it worth his while.

Attach a leash to your dog's collar. Hold the leash in your left hand. Face your dog and put a tiny treat between your right thumb and index finger. Say, "Maple, watch me." Stroke the treat along the dog's muzzle, past his nose, and up to the outside corner of your right eye. If the dog makes eye contact with you, quietly tell him, "Good dog," and give him the treat. Repeat this several times. Soon, you'll be able to eliminate the stroke along the muzzle to your eye; your dog will give you eye contact just with the command, "Maple, watch me."



Attention: Use a treat to teach your dog to make eye contact with you. Soon he will automatically look to you for directions. Praise him when he does it right.

Sit

The sit can be easily taught with a treat and a little physical help. Your puppy should be in a relatively calm mood to teach her the sit. With her standing in front of you and facing to your right, show her the treat, say "Sit," and move the treat to her nose and slightly over her head, at the same

time lightly pushing down on her rump. If the dog sits, immediately give her the treat and praise. Keep the praise calm so that you can repeat the exercise several times. Within a few tries, the dog will sit without the push on her rump. Then you can tell her “Sit” and not offer the treat until she does. This usually takes only one lesson to learn. If possible, try to have several practice sessions in one day.



***Sit:** When you teach your puppy to “sit,” hold a treat above her nose and use light pressure on her rump. Don’t forget to praise her when she does it right!*

Down

Ask your puppy to sit, with the leash hanging down from her collar. Give the command “Down,” stroking with a treat in your right hand from her nose and down her chest to the ground. At the same time, lightly tug the leash toward the ground. If the dog resists after several tries, you may need to lift her front paws from under her with your left hand while pulling down with your right. Don’t forget to praise and give a treat.

Stay

This is a very important obedience command to teach your dog. If you ever see your dog entering a dangerous situation, such as crossing a busy road, you'll be happy you taught this.

With the dog in a sitting position, tell him "Stay," give a slight backward pressure to the leash, and pivot in front of the dog so you are facing him. Praise your dog if he doesn't move, then pivot back to his side. Repeat this several times, eventually lengthening the time and distance you are away. When the dog has mastered this in the sit position, you should teach him to stay in the down position using the same method.



Stay: When you tell your dog to "stay," your hand should look like a solid barrier in front of his face.

Heel

Obedience should always be taught with the dog walking on the left side of the handler. Since your dog already knows how to walk on a leash, you can easily teach him that "Heel" means to stay next to you without pulling or lagging on the leash. A good place to teach this to a puppy is along a wall or fence, where he won't have an opportunity to wander. Don't crowd him too much, however, or he may begin to lag behind or forge ahead.

Start out with the dog in a sitting position next to your left side. Tell him "Heel" and start off with your left foot, which will act as a cue. Also, give a light tug on the leash. Praise the dog as he stays next to you. Every time you

stop, tell your dog to “sit” — assisting him, if necessary, with a slight pressure on his rump with your left hand and a slight upward movement with the leash with your right hand. Don’t forget praise for everything your dog does right. When he has mastered the “heel” this far, add changes in your speed and direction, and circle around objects.



Heel: Teaching your dog to “heel” along a fence or wall helps keep him moving straight ahead. Be sure there’s ample space between your dog and the fence so he doesn’t feel squeezed.

Come

An important thing to remember is that when your dog misbehaves, you should never call her to you and then punish her. No dog in her right mind would come a second time!

Once your dog has learned to walk on the leash, put a longer line on her and let her wander and explore. Give the command “Come” and lightly tug

on the leash. If the dog comes toward you, lavish her with great amounts of praise and even a treat. If the dog is confused or resistant, reel her in to you without being forceful, and praise her. Soon you can run with the dog on a long line and let her play. At unexpected times, give the command “Come” and praise the dog if she does. If she comes without the need for a tug, give her a treat also.

Learning to Stand for a Veterinarian’s Exam

A squirming, wiggling, unmanageable puppy is hard for the veterinarian to examine. However, you can easily teach your puppy to stand for an examination on the veterinarian’s table while you’re holding him. The training is done at home. First, put a soft buckle collar on the puppy and let him walk around for a short time. Don’t leave him alone while he’s getting used to the collar, and don’t attach a leash yet.

When your puppy has become familiar with the collar, prepare a raised platform that’s just 18 to 24 inches (45–60 cm) from the floor. The distance must not be over 24 inches (60 cm) to start. An airline dog crate works well. Place a rubber doormat or a piece of scrap carpet on top so that the puppy will have good footing. If necessary, tape the mat or carpet to the crate so that it doesn’t slide or slip.

You should be in a carpeted room or outside on the grass; that way, if the puppy falls or jumps, there’s little chance he’ll be hurt. Clip a lightweight leash to his collar as a safety precaution.

Gently pick up the puppy with your right hand under his neck, your finger and thumb holding his collar. Support the puppy under his stomach with your left hand. The puppy must feel secure. Place him on the mat. Keep both hands in the same position to prevent him from jumping or falling off. Praise immediately if he remains calm by saying something in a happy voice — maybe, “*Good dog.*” So long as he remains calm, don’t worry if your puppy wants to lie down or sit.

If the puppy is rambunctious or is afraid, scold him with a firm “No” and place him firmly exactly where you want him to be. Don’t be rough; your voice and actions must be firm but not rough. Do not try to comfort him by saying, “It’s okay.” This will only reinforce the disorderly behavior or fear.

Scratch the puppy under his tummy with your left hand and under his neck with your right hand.

Keep this position for only a minute. Then remove the puppy from the “table” and cuddle him. In a few minutes, repeat the entire procedure, placing the puppy on the table again. Remember to praise immediately whenever the puppy is calm. Scratching his belly and chin helps to soothe him as well.

If the puppy has been remaining calm, start to place him in a standing position. At all times, keep your hands in the same position. Gradually increase the time on the table to 3 minutes. Even the most unruly puppy can usually be trained to stand for this long in one lesson.



Standing: When teaching your puppy to stand for an examination, practice on a surface that's not slippery.

Helpful Hints for the Veterinary Visits

Veterinarians' examination tables are often made of stainless steel or Formica. These surfaces are slippery, cold, and even terrifying to some puppies. Why not take along a small doormat your puppy is familiar with when you make your first few visits to the veterinarian?

The familiar surface, along with the familiar placement of your hands, if you've done the proper training at home, will help ease your puppy's fears.

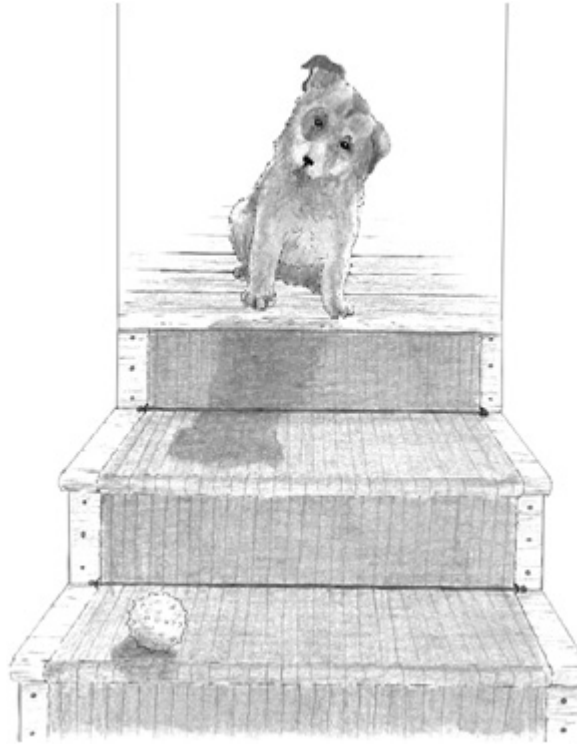
Solving Common Behavior Problems

Puppies and dogs can develop some behaviors that we don't like. Before you can find a solution, you must understand why your dog is acting this way.

Afraid of the Stairs

If your puppy will gallop up the stairs, and then stands at the top and refuses to come down, he's normal! Puppies are rarely afraid to go up stairs, because their balance seems to be fine in that direction. But when their head and front feet are facing down, they feel off balance, as if they're going to tumble down.

Solution: Put the puppy just two stairs from the bottom. Call him to you or show him one of his favorite toys or a tiny piece of his favorite treat. The puppy should easily master this short distance. Praise him with great zest. Gradually, over a period of many days, increase the number of steps until he has mastered them all. Be very careful, however, because stairs can be dangerous to puppies if they tumble.



Pups love climbing up stairs, but they may need training to learn how to come down.

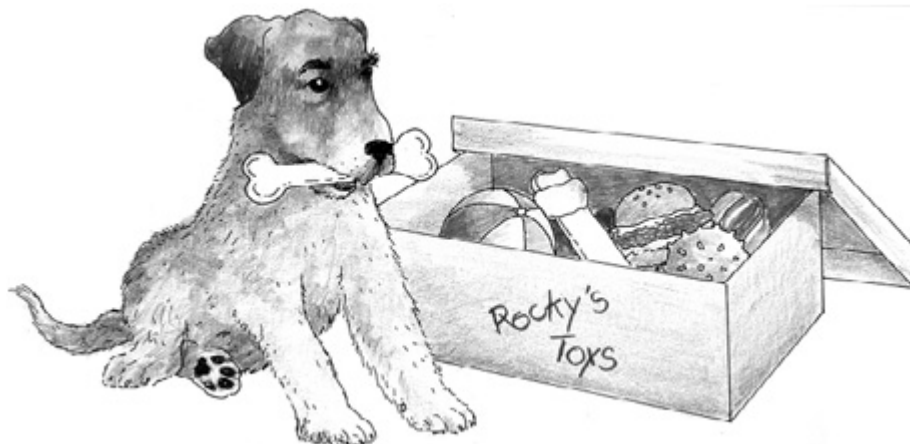
Chewing

All dogs, especially puppies, love to chew. Dogs naturally pick up and carry things in their mouths. The chewing desire is with a dog all through her life, but is strongest when she's teething, from about 5 to 10 months of age.

Solution: Collect a selection of chewing items that are safe for the puppy and "legal" for use in your home. Things you can buy include rawhide and nylon chew toys, knotted ropes, Cresite hard-rubber balls and tugs, and various other dog toys. Place all of the "legal" chewing items in a tub or box. Make sure the puppy knows that anything that isn't from this box is off limits.

Keep the box handy so that when the pup starts to chew on Mom's favorite chair, you can redirect her chewing urge. Scold only when you catch her actually chewing on something that's off limits. Tell the pup "No chew" in a firm voice as you hand her a "legal" item to chew. Praise the pup when she takes the item.

Keep your eyes on the puppy when she's free in the house, until she's well past the critical teething stage. Don't stop watching her until you're sure that chewing is no longer a threat.



You can teach your puppy that only items from her own box are okay to use as play toys.

Is Your Dog Eating His Toys?

Some dogs are prone to *pica* — the behavior of eating and swallowing things that are nonfood items. Pica is very rare in dogs, but you should always watch what your dog does with a particular item. If you find that he is eating a particular material, such as plastic, rubber, or paper, eliminate that material when you are selecting toys for your dog.



Specially designed nylon and hard-rubber chew toys massage your dog's gums and help curb unwanted chewing behavior.

Mouthing

Mouthing is a dog's habit of putting her mouth on people and other dogs. It's natural for puppies, but it isn't pleasant to people. Puppies need to do a certain amount of mouthing of each other to learn just how hard they can bite in play. But you're not a puppy, and you shouldn't allow your puppy to bite or mouth you. This would put you on the same level as the puppy, as if you were her littermate. As she gets older, she may think she can be dominant over you.

Solution: If your puppy bites, even in a light way, give a loud, convincing "Ouch!" response. If she stops mouthing or biting, or tries to lick your hand, praise her. If she doesn't, repeat the "Ouch!" at the next bite. If the puppy doesn't seem to get your message that the biting is painful, grab her muzzle and say "No!" the next time she bites. If she stops, praise her and give her a chew toy. You must be consistent and never give up. The puppy will eventually learn the lesson.

Begging

This is one problem behavior that is created by people. Never give your dog treats when you're eating. No matter how much you would like to share your lunch with your dog, don't let his big brown eyes sway you to give in. Once you've started to give the dog food when you're eating, he will be relentless in begging from you and even other people. Your dog should receive all of his meals in one place or the same dish. Treats should be reserved for play and training times only.

Solution: If your dog has already developed this habit, you will have to resort to scolding him for something he now thinks is fine with you. If your dog is already obedience trained, you could use the "Stay" command when you try to retrain to stop the begging. When the dog begs, say "No!" and take him a reasonable distance away where you can still watch him. Put him at a "Stay," even facing away from you. If the dog breaks the "stay" and still tries to beg, repeat the same procedure. You must be consistent and do this no matter where he starts to beg. Putting the dog in the crate won't give him the correct message. Your dog won't learn that begging is no longer "legal" in your house. The crate shouldn't be used for punishment.

Getting into Garbage

This is a problem created by putting tempting tidbits in the garbage and expecting your dog to ignore them. Remember, a dog's nose rules his head.

Solution: Empty the garbage often or keep it out of reach.

Jumping Up on People

Dogs jump up on people to get attention. Puppies should be taught from a very young age not to jump. The main key in preventing and stopping jumping is not to give the puppy or dog any type of positive attention when she does jump. Don't pet her or talk to her in a way that she might misunderstand as approval.

Allowing a dog to jump up on people will eventually backfire and cause you trouble. The dog might be muddy and get someone's clothes dirty. The person may have his arms full of groceries, including eggs and breakable bottles. The person may be elderly or handicapped. In any case, it's not a good behavior to allow.

Solution: If your puppy is young enough, use a stern voice to say “Off!” as you take her paws off you and place them on the ground. Then praise the dog. If you see that the puppy is coming over and has that “I’m going to jump on you” look, give her a firm “Off” before she jumps and you’ll be one step ahead. As she sits down, praise her. For a large dog, you can take a small step forward as she approaches and lift one knee to block her from full-body contact, at the same time giving her a stern verbal “Off.” The minute she sits down, praise her.

For a dog that is resistant to the mild solutions above, I suggest that she be taught the “Sit” command (see page 19). As the dog approaches, give the “sit” command and praise as she sits.

Whining

Whining can become an irritating habit if it isn’t corrected immediately. Spending too much time with your puppy can cause him to be overly dependent on you. He needs to learn to accept being alone, or without your attention, even if you’re home or in the same room. Your dog may also whine when he needs to go out or when he’s hungry.

Solution: If it’s near the time the puppy needs to relieve himself, take him right out to the potty area. Return him to the same spot when he’s finished.

If the dog is in his crate, be sure he has some toys to keep his interest. You don’t want the puppy to think he’s banished or being punished when he’s in the crate.

If the puppy isn’t in the crate, watch his body language when he whines. Is he trying to get your attention because he needs your help? Maybe his chew toy was taken by another dog or is behind a closed door.

Whining for No Reason

If you can’t find any reason for the whining, ignore it completely. When it stops, you can take the puppy out of the crate and play with

her. Never remove the puppy when she's whining, or you will reinforce the whining and it will continue — only stronger next time.

Barking

Dogs bark for several reasons:

- They sense danger.
- They want something they can't get by themselves: food, water, a toy, a cat in the neighbor's yard, another dog.
- They're annoyed or bored.
- They're joining other dogs in song.

Solution: The first two reasons for barking can be corrected by changing the situation. In the case of the last two reasons, don't allow the dog to bark for so long that it becomes a habit. These are usually problems of an outside dog that has little interaction with his family. Such barking is irritating to almost anyone who hears it, and can cause problems between your family and your neighbors. A barking dog wants attention. Give him plenty of attention. Play fetch, or take him for a healthy jogging expedition before you go to bed. Both of you will sleep more soundly.

Digging

This is most often a problem with outside dogs that are bored. When you spend a lot of quality time with your dog, she won't be interested in digging. Dogs dig for several reasons. Terrier breeds were developed to dig out their prey. Other dogs have this instinct also, but to a lesser degree. All dogs have a keen sense of smell and can identify animals, insects, and even certain objects that are under the ground. They'll dig to get to the item.

Solution: If a dog digs to make a den, provide a doghouse or other "den."

If a dog digs to find cool earth to lie on and cool her body in hot weather, find a way to provide cool spots in the dog's pen.

If a dog digs for fun and out of boredom, spend more time with her. If you give your dog plenty of attention, she's less apt to be a digger.

Eating Poop (Coprophagia)

Although it's disgusting for us to realize our dog has done it, this is a natural behavior for dogs, and common among many other animal species. In today's world, it isn't a healthy practice for the dog and it's not healthy for us to be around a dog that does this. Parasites and diseases can be easily transmitted by this behavior. Puppies are prone to this problem a little more than adult dogs are.

Solution: If you have more than one dog, put each one in the potty area separately. Clean up every little speck before you let the dog with the problem enter the area. Stay with him every minute, and scold him with a firm "No!" if he makes any attempt to eat his own feces. There are also products you can add to the dog's food or put on the feces that are said to stop the practice.

Escaping

A dog that's loose and out of control can cause huge problems for you, for other people and their property, and for domestic and wild animals. Escaping is also dangerous for the dog.

Solution: Before you ever leave your dog alone in the yard, check every inch of the fence and gates to make sure that there's no way the dog can find an escape route. Once a dog discovers that she can get out of the yard, she will continue trying, even if you repair every place she finds. Check for loose, rusted, or broken wire; cracked or rotted wood; easily opened gate latches; and gaps between the fence and the ground. Make sure that the fence is tall enough to prevent your dog from jumping over, and that it's constructed of a material that will keep your dog from climbing out. If the fence wire isn't buried in the ground, the dog may dig under it. The best way to cure escaping is to prevent it in the first place.

If the dog is continually left alone and isolated, she will become restless and bored. Dogs are intelligent; they know that the grass is greener on the other side if they aren't getting much attention at home. Also, if they aren't

neutered or spayed, both males and females will go to all lengths to escape and find a mate. Neutering or spaying is a must for dogs that aren't going to be used for breeding.

Lots of play and exercise will satisfy and tire the dog and reduce the chances that she will search for a way out.

Chasing

Chasing is another natural behavior for dogs. Dogs also use the chase behavior in play. They love to chase and be chased.

Solution: Don't play chase games with your dog unless you both have been through at least basic obedience training and you have pretty good control of your dog. A dog that chases cars feels that the car is "running away" from him, and if he barks at the car and "chases it off," he feels like the winner. Your dog should never be loose and able to do this.

Introducing Your Puppy to a Cat

If you wish to introduce your puppy to a cat, be sure that the cat isn't afraid of dogs and is quiet natured. You should have some light obedience control on the puppy before you begin an introduction.

With the puppy on-leash, introduce him to the cat. If the puppy isn't gentle with the cat, give him a verbal "No!" and a light correction with the leash. If you allow him to be rough with the cat or move toward it too fast, the cat may run; that will increase the chances that the puppy will want to chase it. If you have a cat that isn't socialized with dogs, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to keep the cat from running away. And the running will stimulate the chase.

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Editing and page production by Nancy Ringer

Cover illustration by Jeffrey Domm

Cover design by Carol J. Jessop (Black Trout Design)

Text illustrations by Jeffrey Domm, except pages 9, 10, and 11 by
Brigita Fuhrmann

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Printed in the United States by Excelsior

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Storer, Pat.

Housebreaking and training your puppy / Pat Storer.

p. cm. — (A Storey country wisdom bulletin; A-242)

ISBN 978-1-58017-298-1 (pb : alk. paper)

1. Puppies—training. I. Series.

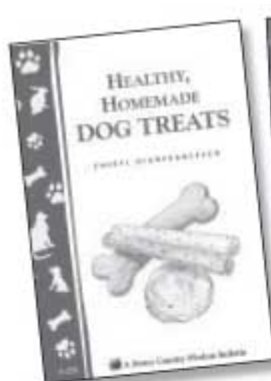
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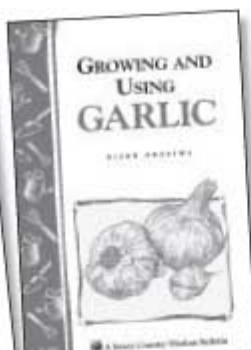
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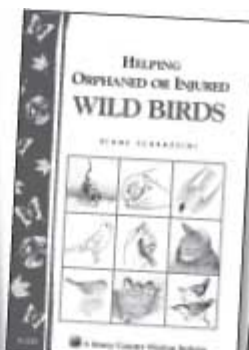
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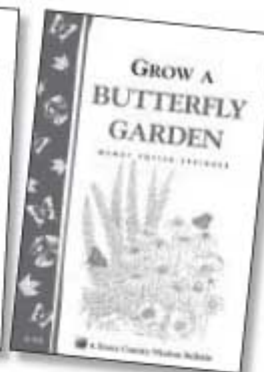
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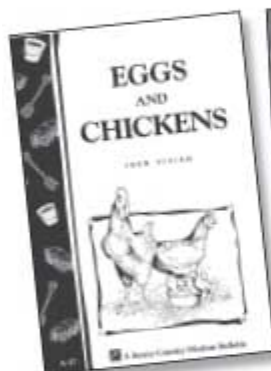
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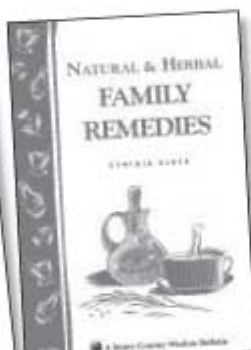
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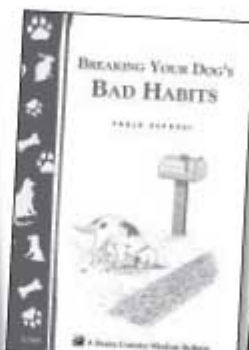
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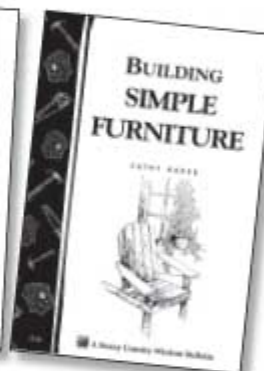
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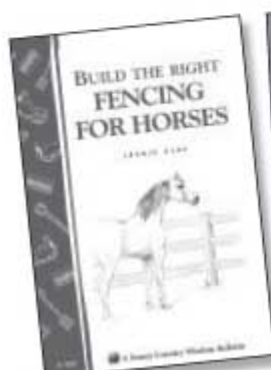
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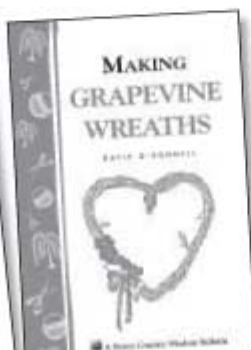
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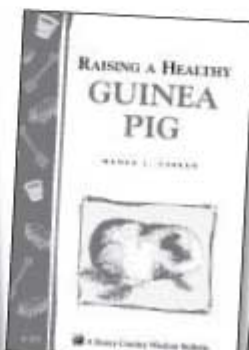
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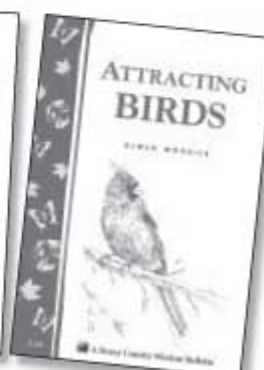
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