



How To Show Your Own Dog

by E. Katie Gammill, (Indian Creek),
AKC Judge: Hound, Working and Herding
— www.TheDogPlace.org

Why did your dog NOT win today? Some decide the judge is a "handler judge" while others feel judges have color or "political" preferences.

Often driving home becomes a venting session but some who may consider a judge inept have NOT READ their own breed standard. Most judges truly attempt to do a credible job with the dogs that appear in their ring. This is why judge's education evolved. So, before we take the judging community to task, what about the exhibitors responsibilities? Speaking for myself, I have no preferences except what is written in the standards. However, I will say this, "The CORRECT color is the BEST color!"

Desired markings are a plus, like "icing on the cake" whereas some markings are distracting. Many judges see beyond color. IF you choose to exhibit something different than the preferred colors as designated in your standard, don't be surprised when your dog is not considered for Winners.

Most judges are serious about their judging and participate in continuing education. Being human, some make mistakes and most learn from these mistakes. Before looking for excuses as to why some dogs don't make it to the winners circle, consider the below list as to what most judges want to see in the dog that is presented to them. They concentrate on virtues, not faults. Remember, a judge has only a scant amount of time to consider type, soundness, character, conditioning, and presentation. That's why good handlers don't show dogs out of condition and the dogs are trained.

Good show ring advice

to help you win with a good dog

1. Show up on time at ringside. This means for your class, and the possibility of returning for Reserve. Don't expect judges to wait for you.
2. Take handling classes. Proper presentation is important.
3. Dress in appropriate attire that compliments your dog. Don't wear anything that would take away from the dog's presentation.
4. Be sure your dog is clean and properly groomed. "Holding coat" results in mats and knots. Some judges will place a good dog with an inadequate coat if the dog is clean and brushed.
5. Trim those toenails.
6. Clean those teeth. ↗

(*"How To Show Your Own Dog" cont.*)

7. Train your dog to stand for examination. Teach it to allow a "bite" check or tell the judge you prefer to "show the bite" yourself.
8. If your dog shies or pulls away, go back to training classes.
9. Clean the belly hair around the "plumbing" and make sure there is no feces under the tail.
10. Practice posing your dog in a large mirror to see if you appear a "team".
11. Trim the feet if the standard calls for it. Do not over do "grooming products".
12. Use a loose lead if possible on the "down and back." Train the dog for a "go around" at a comfortable gait without breaking stride.
13. STAY IN YOUR PLACE during the class, especially if the class is large. Don't get lost!
14. Follow procedures set out by the judge officiating.
15. If you don't win, congratulate the winners.

Another tip is to allow someone your dog trusts to present your dog. This enables you to evaluate your dog against the competition. Keeping records of particular judges "likes and dislikes" may be helpful but each entry is different on any given show. Good judges always look for structure, type, presentation, symmetry, and conditioning.

Too often the difference between "winning and losing" rests on the person presenting the dog. Pay attention in the ring as one never knows when a judge may "look back" for a quick comparison. Some judges (myself) don't like exhibitors jerking, pushing, or moving the dog with their feet. Use the bait or lead.

As an exhibitor, YOU have the power to present your dog well. You know your dogs' virtues and faults and can present it in such a manner as to accentuate your dog's good points. Remember this is a dog show, not a people show. The way you handle the dog can make or break how the judge sees him.

If you are at ringside, on time and ready, and dressed appropriately (it's not a cocktail party or picnic) for your breed, the judge will see your entry at its best. The overall picture you present increases your chances for the judge to point to your dog for those coveted points.

Don't be afraid or too proud to ask for help. Most people will be happy to assist and encourage you IF you give them a

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(*How To Show Your Own Dog* cont.)

chance when they are not readying for their own ring call.

Some new people will "catch fire" and others fall by the wayside. The first step toward success, for both exhibitors and our sport, is to make new people feel welcome. In turn, those seeking assistance need to give the more seasoned participants the respect they deserve.

About the author: Edna "Katie" Gammill is an AKC judge (since 1979). Katie judged the Hound, Working and Herding Groups. She is an accomplished poet, artist and freelance writer. □



Grain Free Diet For Your Dog or Cat? Absolutely!

by Lisa Fimberg,
April, 2016

Grain free dog and cat food is becoming increasingly popular as owners love the results. It's actually similar to a gluten free diet in humans which is all the rage! There are many benefits to go grain free with your cat or dog's diet, but as in all diet changes, every dog or cat reacts differently.

Why go grain free?

A grain free diet is similar to what your dog or cat would eat if they were out in the wild. It consists of a majority of meat based proteins and a few fruits and vegetables. A grain free diet enables your cat or dog to absorb the most nutrition, since a cat or dog's stomach and digestive system is not made to handle grains.

A grain free diet is great for overweight pets

Your dog or cat usually needs less food when eating a grain free pet food because it fills them up quickly.

Grain free is great for high-energy cats and dogs

Grain free food provides a lot of energy and nutrition for your cat or dog, but if you have an indoor cat or an older dog with limited mobility, grain free food could cause your dog to gain weight. Grain free food is recommended for active pets (especially dogs) that need to reduce some of that excess energy.

A grain free diet can help dog or cats with allergies

Some of the benefits of feeding your dog or cat a grain free diet include: decreased allergy symptoms, a healthy looking skin or fur, a bigger appetite in finicky eaters, increased energy, better digestion, decreased appetite which can lead to weight loss in an overweight pet. Grain free is also beneficial for hypoallergenic pets.

A grain free diet is recommended for pets five years old and up

The ideal age to switch your cat or dog to a grain free diet is when is five years old and up. At an older age, your dog or cat might have more difficulty digesting a food with has grains and therefore grain free would help their digestion and appetite. Make

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VACCINATIONS... HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Health and Wellness, March 2016

Most pets today are being given too many vaccinations too often. Many caretakers are unaware of the known risks inherent in vaccines. Studies upon studies have been performed that show the very real dangers in over-vaccinating and the risks involved every time a pet gets a shot.

But the word is not getting out. Dogs and cats continue to be over-vaccinated, resulting in compromised immune systems, serious diseases and (more often than you might imagine) death.

John Clifton, pet advocate and award-finalist author, thoroughly researched the topic, devoting a year to this single subject. He was amazed to find that all the major animal health organizations (such as the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Animal Hospital Association and the American Association of Feline Practitioners) have recently issued guidelines emphasizing the need to minimize rather than maximize vaccines. The risks range from simple allergies to cancer to terminal shock.

It seems most veterinarians are not following the guidelines of their own professional literature! Mr. Clifton's stated mission is to spread the word to every pet owner in the hopes of preserving the health and saving the lives of our beloved animal companions. This is not a marginal issue. A search on Google for pet vaccination dangers will return tens of thousands of links on this topic. Here is a sample site, written by veterinarians.

So many devoted pet lovers, believing they are dutifully doing the very best for their pets, discover the truth too late. They're devastated to learn that giving all those unnecessary vaccines ("just to be safe!") and annual "booster" shots has resulted in tragedy.

The result of Mr. Clifton's work, and the work of countless researchers, is encapsulated in this little volume which is very easily read and understood by all. It is not an "anti-vaccine" book, but a balanced look at the facts. Once armed with the information in this book, you can make the best decisions for yourself and your pet.

We urge you to read this book as soon as possible — certainly before your next vaccination appointment with your veterinarian.

For a very thorough article on canine vaccinations and titer tests, read this article posted from *The Whole Dog Journal*: "Over-Vaccination — Dog Owners Beware" (http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/13_8/features/Over-Vaccinating-Your-Dog_20036-1.html). □

("Grain Free Diet..." cont.)

sure to look for a grain free food that has fish and meat as the first few ingredients.

Switching to a grain free diet

The easiest way to switch to a grain free diet (like any diet change) is to slowly mix the new grain free food with the old food. Start by using a small amount of the grain free and keep increasing the amount and decreasing the amount of the old food. Your cat or dog might have an upset stomach or diarrhea at first when you are switching the food. It usually takes about a week or so to make the transition.

As always, if you decide to switch to a grain free diet, check with your veterinarian to determine the best type of grain free food for your cat or dog.

— <http://petpav.com> □

Surprisingly Common Ways We Misinterpret What Our Dogs and Cats Are Telling Us

by Dr. Wailani Sung MS, PhD, DVM, DACVB January 21, 2016

A wagging tail is usually a signal that a dog wants to interact, but that interaction can either be friendly or aggressive.

Is a wagging tail always the sign of a friendly dog? If your cat rolls on her back, does she really want you to rub her tummy? If your dog is "smiling" does that mean he is happy? As a veterinary behaviorist, I have to tell you, the answers to these questions might surprise you.

There are some common behaviors that our dogs and cats exhibit that many people often misinterpret. Let's review some canine and feline body language in order to help you determine what your pet is really trying to tell you.

Weigh the Wag

For example, tail wagging is not necessarily a sign of friendliness. In dogs, a wagging tail is an indication that the dog is willing to interact, but that interaction can be either aggressive or friendly. In order to determine what the dog is "saying," you need to look at the rest of the dog's body posture to figure out if he is approachable or not. Are the dog's ears pinned back and flat against the head, sort of like a seal's? Is his body and/or head lowered? Is he avoiding direct eye contact? Is he holding his body still or is he perhaps leaning away from you? These are all signs that the dog is uncomfortable and wants to avoid further interactions. Also keep in mind that a dog may not always choose to leave your vicinity in order to avoid a confrontation. Just as some people might just turn away from someone to avoid a conversation rather than move all the way across the room, a dog might try to stand, turn his head or

hold his body away from you if he is uncomfortable. On the other hand, if the dog is being friendly, you might observe that he comes over to you and presents his side or hindquarters to be petted or scratched. He may nudge your hand for attention or press his body up against you. Or, when you look at the dog or speak to it, he may move closer to you for more attention and not bark or growl as he approaches.

In cats, a "wagging" tail is definitely a sign of agitation. Cats don't really wag their tails like dogs do. When relaxed, they tend to hold their tails quietly with minimal movement in comparison to a dog. So if a cat is moving her tail back and forth quickly two or three times in a motion I describe more as "whipping," this might indicate agitation. It means something has caused the cat to be aroused, and it is best to give her some space and not interact with her until she has calmed down.

Just because a cat is lying on his back doesn't mean he's giving you an invitation to give him a belly rub.

Tummy Troubles

Another behavior that we as humans often misread is when an animal rolls over onto its back. This is not always a sign that he or she wants a tummy rub. When a dog lies on his back, he is showing a sign of utter submission and appeasement in the dog world. People have chosen to interpret it as a sign the dog wants a belly rub. Many dogs may simply like attention, will take it any way they can get it and have learned to love their belly

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("Surprisingly Common Ways We Misinterpret..." cont.)

rubs. Other dogs, however, may feel really threatened by someone leaning over them while they are showing their most ultimate form of appeasement. Submissive behavior is deferential behavior used to tell the other dog that he wants to avoid conflict or a confrontation and that he needs space. When a dog rolls over onto his back, I typically ask him to sit up first before I give him attention to avoid this potential problem. Some people are really surprised when they try to pet a dog's belly and he growls or snaps. While some dogs have been conditioned to receive attention in this manner and maybe even have learned to like it, always keep in mind that in the natural order of things, this is actually a signal saying, "give me space" or "do not hurt me."

In cats, this is even more true. When a cat rolls over to show you her abdomen, it is a sign that she feels really comfortable with you. It is not, however, an invitation to rub her belly. Many people are surprised when they try to do so and the kitty grabs their hands and bites them or kicks out at their hands with their back legs. Like a dog, a cat who rolls over on her side is often indicating comfort and deference (a submissive behavior). She is indicating that she is not aggressive and is trying to appease you or another cat. Despite how we may like to interpret the behavior, however, it is important to keep in mind, especially with cats, that she does not necessarily want you to follow up with physical contact!

We usually recognize a dog as smiling when he's panting with his mouth open and has a relaxed expression on his face.

Smile vs. Snarl

What is a smile in a dog? For many people, it is a dog panting with an open mouth and a relaxed expression on his face. For other people, it is when a dog approaches them and shows them their teeth prior to receiving attention or getting a treat. In these situations, the dog's lips are pulled back toward the rear of the jaw exposing some of their pearly white incisors and canines. This is different from a snarl, in which the lips are

lifted up vertically and the nose becomes wrinkled to show you the canines. This is usually accompanied by a stiff facial expression and body postures. What some people consider to be a smile, however, is not necessarily an indication of a happy dog. In the first described scenario, that might be the case. But dogs express their emotions in different manners compared to humans and it's best to be very cautious. Keep in mind, we are the only species known to bare our teeth in order to show happiness. In other animal societies, baring teeth is a sign of threat!

Dogs usually raise their hackles when they are wary or cautious, but it doesn't necessarily mean that they are going to attack.

Hair-Raising Experiences

Hackles being raised in a dog (veterinarians call this "piloerection") is not always an indication that the dog is about to attack another dog. Dogs often raise their hackles when they are being wary and cautious but not always before they attack. A dog may approach another dog slowly with his hackles raised, then greet the other dog with a play bow! When a cat has his tail "puffed" out, that is a sign of high arousal as well. It also does not always mean the cat is about to attack. The puffed tail can occur due to the sight of another cat or animal or upon hearing a certain sound. My cats, for example, have exhibited "piloerection" when they see stray cats on our deck or hear strange noises coming from my husband's laptop. However, in both species, I would recommend monitoring the animals carefully and limiting interactions with them until they have calmed down. If a dog or cat is in a state of high emotional arousal, give him or her space to relax to avoid setting off an undesirable reaction.

I hope these comments have been useful and given you some helpful insight into your pet's behaviors. Knowing what your pet's behavior really means can only help build a stronger relationship between you and your four-footed companion, and that is the goal of every veterinary behaviorist. ☐



Dog Allergies & How To Combat Them

Dogs, like humans, can have allergies when something in the environment, their food, or fleas attacks their bodies or immune system. Even if the cause itself is not inherently dangerous, your dogs can potentially have an extreme reaction to the specific allergy. And, usually, it will make your dog miserable! As with any allergy or irritation, the first place to start is with your veterinarian to determine the type of allergy your dog might have and how to treat it.

If your dog has any of the following symptoms, he or she might have an allergy: itchy, red, moist or scabbed skin; excess scratching, itchy, runny eyes, itchy back or tail, sneezing, itchy ears, diarrhea, paw chewing, constant licking and/or swollen paws.

If your dog's itchy, red or irritated skin persists beyond the initial treatment by a veterinarian, allergy testing, most often performed by a veterinary dermatologist or holistic veterinarian is usually recommended.

Relieving symptoms without addressing the source of the problem is a short term fix to what can become a lifelong health problem. And certain drugs used to stop the allergic cycle have significant, potentially very serious side effects, especially those for fleas.

If your dog is allergic to fleas, you can try natural treatments that are available

The best treatment for allergies caused by fleas is to start a flea control program for all of your dogs before the season starts. Remember, outdoor pets can carry fleas inside to indoor pets. See your veterinarian for advice about the best flea control products for your dog and the environment. Ask your vet if an all-natural pest repellent like Natural Flea and Tick

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(*"Dog Allergies..." cont.*)

Defense during flea season would help cure the fleas.

If you know fleas are a problem for your dog, try combing your dog's hair at least once daily, every day during pest season with a flea comb. Do this on a white towel or other light colored cloth so you can see what's coming off your dog as you comb.

Bathe your dog often. A soothing bath will kill any fleas on your dog, help heal skin irritation, and make her feel more comfortable and less itchy. Also, clean animals aren't as attractive to fleas. Pick a non-grain (no oatmeal) herbal shampoo. Discuss with your vet what prescription shampoos are best, as frequent bathing with the wrong product can dry out skin.

Your dog might have food allergies which can develop from routine feeding

If your dog has an allergy to something he's eating, it may show itself not only as digestive upset (gas, diarrhea, vomiting, etc.), but also as one or several of the symptoms listed above.

If you think your dog is sensitive to something in his or her diet, it could be that by eating the same food every day for months or years, there's a good chance your dog has developed an allergy to it. Your dog could be sensitive to the single source of protein she's been getting from your specific food. Or your dog could have become sensitive to certain ingredients in the food usually grains and other carbohydrates.

The only way to diagnose a food allergy is to feed your dog a prescription or hydrolyzed protein diet exclusively for 8 -12 weeks. This means no treats, table food or flavored medication and only the prescribed diet (which is hard but can be done)! The diet will be free of potential allergy-causing ingredients and will ideally have ingredients your dog has never been exposed to. Your dog will stay on this diet until his symptoms go away and then you can

(*"Dog Allergies..." cont.*)

start to reintroduce old foods to see which ones might be causing the allergic reaction.

Your dog could also be allergic to irritants in your home or outside

Your dog can also be allergic to any of the different irritants in the environment. These can be outdoor allergens like grasses and pollens, as well as indoor irritants like mold, dust mites, cleaning chemicals and even fabrics like wool or cotton. As a general rule, if your dog is allergic to something inside your home, he'll have year-round symptoms. If he's reacting to something outdoors, it could very well be a seasonal problem.

Below are some recommendations to help:

Make sure your dog's indoor air environment is clean and don't allow smoking around your pooch. Switch to non-toxic cleaning products. Consider investing in an air purifier to control dust mites.

Make sure your dog's drinking water is high quality and doesn't contain fluoride, heavy metals or other contaminants.

If you suspect something outdoors is irritating your dog, in between baths, do foot soaks. Chances are the allergen is coming inside on your pet's feet. He or she can't escape it and then it's being spread around your home.

Try adding a fatty acid supplement might help relieve your dog's itchy skin. There are also shampoos that may help prevent skin infection, which occurs commonly in dogs with allergies. Sprays containing oatmeal, aloe and other natural products are also available.

With time, effort and patience, you can pinpoint the source of your dogs' allergies and then provide the correct treatment.

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— <http://petpav.com> □

Dog Food Review of Royal Canin, Hills Science Plan, Burns — Perhaps Not Such A Premium Dog Food...After All ?

by Stan Rawlinson,
The Original Doglistener

Visit: <http://www.doglistener.co.uk/dog-food-review-royal-canin-hills-and-burns>



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Compiled by Nancy Lee Cathcart (the creator, publisher and editor of an award-winning international dog fanciers' publication that spanned over 30 years), this invaluable guide contains amazing secrets and solutions from professionals in the dog-show world and from pet owners. Of the thousands of hints received, those included in this book were carefully selected to best represent the most helpful and informative solutions available. In addition, for 15 years this author owned, bred and showed consistently-winning dogs (breaking several breed records within the competitive world of dog shows), and her background proved invaluable in creating this detailed reference book.

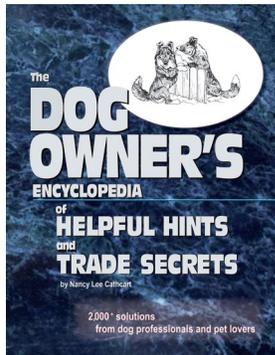
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