



Exercising during the Dog Days of Summer

As the mercury rises in these dog days of summer, being outside can be exhausting and downright dangerous, for humans and dogs alike. Early morning and late evening will be the best times for outdoor activities, when the heat has subsided a bit. However, you'll be happy to hear that there's plenty you can do inside by way of exercise, as some common everyday tricks make for a great workout!

“Take a Bow” or “Downward Dog” (a “doga” pose)

The bow (front legs on the floor, standing on back legs) is a natural stretch, one that dogs will often do when they first rise from a nap. It's a great way to start out an exercise session. Some dogs will easily go into a bow position by luring as if for a “down” but doing it from a stand rather than from a sit. Other dogs go directly to the down, whether from sit or stand. If this is the case, then you'll have to shape the behavior. Starting from a stand, take the lure just a few inches below your dog's nose level, so that he has to tuck his neck down a bit to follow the lure. Say “Yes!” and treat. When this is repeatable, try moving your hand a few inches lower but still not entirely

to the ground. Again your dog will hopefully tuck his head even lower but remain standing. If he flops down to the floor, then go back to your previous stage and inch down the hand signal more gradually. At each stage where he's tucking his head, maybe even bending the front legs, but remain on his back legs, say “Yes!” and give a treat. Even jackpot him for each new criteria he achieves. Before you know it, your dog will be bowing pretty as can be!



Trista does doga

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Introductory Training Offer

Get an extra 30 minutes of training when you purchase a 4-session training package.

(Offer details based on location.)

Call **WOOFGANG** at **646.345.5116** to make an appointment.

Training a Polite Pup

Does your dog jump when greeting people? Does she counter-surf or barrel out the door ahead of you? Does she bark at you for attention or pull on leash? Many of the behaviors that we attribute to “dominance” are really nothing more than rude and pushy from a pup who needs some manners training.

WOOFGANG can help you teach your dog to be polite, attentive and well-mannered, while developing and deepening your relationship. Call **646.345.5116** today!

About the Trainer

Dog trainer **LAURA GARBER**, CPDT-KA, is a professional member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) and is certified by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT), the first national certification for dog trainers.

Laura has authored articles about dogs and dog behavior in dog-centric magazines and on-line resources.

Laura believes strongly in strengthening the bond between human and companion animal. For this reason, she regards training as an exercise in building relationship rather than obedience. Such an approach promises greater understanding and symbiosis within our family packs.

Log on to www.myWoofGang.com.

Hide and Seek

One way to burn off some mental energy is to find games that are specifically suited to your dog's breed. This one is just like you played as a kid... put your dog in a sit-stay, then go off and hide. Call her name and let her sniff you out!

WOOFGANG can give you other fun ways of burning your dog's mental steam. Call **646.345.5116** today!

Exercising during the Dog Days of Summer (cont.)

Tug

Tug is no doubt one of your dog's favorite pastimes! Fortunately, it's a great strength-building exercise as well as a fun bonding activity that we can do with our dogs. By holding the tug at head level, your dog is working out his rear legs. By tugging at ground level, he's working out his front legs. *Caution:* It's important that you do *not* jerk the tug toy quickly from side to side or up and down, as this can cause injury.

Sit-Stand-Sit

The rear legs are often the first to weaken as your dog ages, so it's important that you keep them strong. Moving your dog between a sit and stand can accomplish this. By holding a treat above your dog's nose and moving it back over his head, you effectively push his butt down into the sit position. Now put the treat at nose level and pull it forward just enough to lure your dog to a stand in a single step. You want him to be pushing off with his rear legs for maximum benefit and *not* pulling himself forward with his front legs. *Note:* If your dog uses more than a single step to rise to a stand, it's likely that he's used his front legs rather than his hind legs.

For a greater workout, do this while facing uphill. Alternatively, face sideways on the hill, first one way, then the other, to target each side individually. Start with 3 to 5 repetitions, then gradually increase to 10 or 20 repetitions. Do this exercise every other day, with the day off in between to allow the muscles to mend.

Stand-Down-Stand

Moving from a stand to a down and back again is a great workout for the whole body. Hold a treat at your dog's nose and push back and down, causing him to fold into the down position. Now put the treat at nose level and pull it forward just enough to lure your dog to a stand without moving forward.

As with the Sit-Stand-Sit exercise, increase the difficulty of this exercise by doing it while facing uphill, or by facing sideways on the hill, first one way, then the other, to target each side individually. Start with 3 to 5 repetitions, then gradually increase to 10 or 20 repetitions. Again, allow a day in between for recuperation.

Spin

"Spin" is a *proprioceptive* exercise, one that challenges body awareness through limb placement and balance. With your dog in front of you, hold a treat at your dog's nose height. Lead him around in a tight circle, first in one direction, then the other. If you'd like, you can precede the hand prompt with the verbal cue "spin!" once the behavior is coming fairly fluently. To increase its benefit, this is an exercise you can do on a variety of surfaces, such as gravel and grass.

A Word to the Wise

Remember that outdoor activity is still an essential component of any exercise regimen, giving your dog a change of scenery, which is mentally stimulating, as well as burning physical energy. Consider your dog's athletic program with the same caution and care as you would your own. As with any exercise regimen, start gradually. And consult your vet about whether there are exercises you should avoid because of your dog's physical limitations.

For this article in its entirety, log on to www.myWoofGang.com.



Ask Woofie...

WOOFIE, our puppy Suki has been having some trouble recently on the leash when we walk her. She's been sitting down a lot and pull back, not waiting to keep up or move forward. Any tips for that? Thanks! Meesha

Hiya, Meesha! The most common mistake people make when trying to tempt a stalled dog is to lure the dog forward with a treat – but that's bribery! In fact, it is only reinforcing more stalling behavior. Instead, first try to use happy, repetitive noises and thigh slaps to excite some forward movement. If this doesn't work, then use a time-out, stepping on the leash and turning your back on Suki. After 15 seconds or so, say, "OK, let's go!" and start forward. Some dogs will forget why they stopped in the first place. Once Suki starts to move forward, use happy chatter and highly rewarding treats to encourage and reinforce walking behavior. Gradually you'll be able to fade the reinforcements, as you will have built good walking habit, but when you first start out, be generous!

Hope that helps! **WOOFIE**



Named for her soft downy coat, Velvet would prefer the creature comforts of a velvety bed to the sparseness of her shelter kennel. Though she may take a bit of time to warm up, once she does she's bubbling with enthusiasm for what awaits her and her new friend. She's at the Liberty Humane Society waiting for her forever family.