



# The WoofGang Wag Rag



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Collingswoof Edition

Free

## Training the Relationship

Our dogs have become full-fledged members of our families, snuggling in our beds and accompanying us on our vacations. Just like our human family members, we expect love and respect from our dogs, not rude, demanding behavior. Here are some foundation training skills that will build a deep, bonded relationship...



### Hold Hands: Loose-Leash Walking

#### A Recall: Come

Recall is not only inspired by a highly prized reward, such as wonderful treats or a fun game of tug, but also by a genuine desire to be with his human partner. That said, there is no greater measure of the depth of a relationship than the strength of your dog's recall.

Puppies come with a pre-installed recall, but we make the mistake of punishing it out of them by calling them to us when we're angry. Always make your dog's return to you a happy event!

Regard loose-leash walking as holding hands with a loved one; neither partner is tugging on the other. Further, consider that a dog walking on a loose leash must be attentive to the whereabouts of his human, often checking in with a flick of the ears or a glance. A dog on a taut leash can feel his human quite palpably. Clearly there is more relationship, attention and respect between partners holding hands with each other on a loose leash.

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## Healthy Hound

So what about a raw diet?! It's trending like crazy right now and a highly debated topic across the industry. Here are a few facts to get you started...

Raw diets, for dogs or cats, *can* be good if done knowledgeably and carefully. Home-preparing a raw diet is tricky, as dogs need meat, organ meat, and bone meal in a specially formulated ratio. And, as few home-prepared

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## Featured Rescue Kitty: JERSEY



One of a litter of five kittens abandoned at just days old in a pile of dirt, Jersey and his sibs were found by a Good Samaritan and taken to the Burlington County Animal Shelter for care and then placement in a foster home. The kittens quickly earned Cowboys nicknames because they looked so much like little cows. Unfortunately, three of the five passed away, leaving only Jersey and his brother Angus. These two rambunctious boys wrestled and played together, ate and slept to-

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## Beyond the Brush

Working with animals inherently comes with its share of safety concerns and, in my 15 years of experience in grooming, I have found that most unfortunate incidents are the result of insufficient communication. Clarity and communication are essential to establishing any happy partnership, between the pet, the pet parent and the pet care provider.

Because you know your pet best, you are his advocate; you give him a voice. So full disclosure with your groomer, veteri-

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### ***Beyond the Brush (cont.)***

narian, pet sitter and trainer will facilitate positive results. Tell us about his past experience, his likes and dislikes, fears and discomforts, what comforts him most... every little bit helps. Further, consistent, positive and nurturing exposure to any experience can help reframe even the scariest of moments.

Some of our pets may have specific requirements. Whether it be a quieter time in the grooming facility, an extra pair of hands to help, or a time when no other animals around, special arrangements can always be made as long as we know ahead of time. It is best to let us know right at the time of scheduling your appointment or reservation.

There are so many ways to address the stresses of grooming, boarding and medical care. As pet care providers, it is our job to keep them healthy and safe and our pleasure to make them happy. It is why we do what we do! Your help will only make us better. Let's work as a team and keep the lines of communication open and clear.

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### ***Healthy Hound (cont.)***

diets have adequate vitamins and minerals, they'll likely need supplements as well. Calculating the daily caloric needs of your pet is complicated and should best be left to a professional. However, for some ideas about what a home-prepared raw diet might look like for your dog, check out the website [www.BalanceIt.com](http://www.BalanceIt.com).

There are also commercial raw diets available in refrigerated, frozen, and freeze-dried forms. These can be decent alternatives, as they are already balanced for you and are certainly much more convenient, but they can be costly.

Be forewarned: If you do decide that a raw diet is right for your dog, you will need to be meticulous about sanitation. Handling raw meat is a serious business, and doing it improperly can lead to serious illness. Use stainless steel bowls and clean everything thoroughly.

If you're curious about a raw diet, a great middle ground can be to supplement your pet's current diet. Aim for about 20% of the meal to be fresh food, like meat or produce. You should consult a Board Certified Nutritionist for specific help if you are interested in feeding fully raw.

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The authors of the *Wag Rag* are inspired by all things dog and love to educate dog guardians on the topics that contribute to the physical and behavioral health and happiness of our best furry friends. Is there a topic of interest to you? Contact Laura at [laura@mywoofgang.com](mailto:laura@mywoofgang.com) with questions and suggestions!

### ***Featured Pet (cont.)***

gether, and it was hoped that they would go home together. Sadly, Jersey got sick and so Angus was adopted without him. Now Jersey is healthy and thriving and ready for his own family. With his big ears and lanky legs, this goofy boy is hilarious to watch! At four months old, Jersey is a love bug who likes to lounge and watch people, and also to playfully boop people with his paws. He loves other cats and, though he has never been around dogs, he may make friends with laid back dogs.

Jersey is neutered, current on vax and available for adoption through the Burlington County Shelter.

### ***Relationship (cont.)***

#### **Impulse Control: Wait**

Teach your dog patience. Have him remain seated when visitors approach. Make him wait at the door or as his bowl is lowered to the floor. Think of all the occasions you might use a *wait* with your dog: when crossing the street or putting on his leash... the possibilities are endless!

#### **Sharing**

With a new dog, it is important to exercise care around his resources because, when your relationship is new, trust has not been earned yet. Resource guarding is a relationship-based behavior – trust around resources needs time and experience to develop as the bond grows.

#### **Companion Behaviors**

I share my life with a rescue named Tilly. I take her everywhere I can, from trips across the country to adventures closer to home. Such shared experiences require the good behavior befitting a companion.

Visit [www.myWoofGang.com](http://www.myWoofGang.com) for articles building the skills for each of the facets mentioned in this article.

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