



Dear friends,

Welcome to our August Newsletter from www.bestdoggietips.com.

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We hope you enjoy the newsletter.



IN LOVING MEMORY OF EBONY
WHO PASSED AWAY 4 AUGUST 2009

Handle every stressful situation like a dog – if you can't eat it or hump it, then pee on it and walk away. – Anon

Recipe - Chicken Stew

Ingredients

1 chicken
2 potatoes, skin on, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
1 cup green beans, chopped
¼ small pumpkin, chopped
1 cup uncooked rice
1 small packet egg noodles

To Make

Place the chicken in a large saucepan, cover with water and bring to a boil. Simmer for 1 hour or until chicken is thoroughly cooked.

Remove the chicken from the pot and place aside to cool. Add the vegetables, noodles and rice to the cooking water, bring back to the boil and cook for 20 minutes or until rice and vegetables are cooked.

Meanwhile, remove the chicken meat from the carcass and tear into bite sized pieces for your dog. Add this to the stew and stir to combine well. Cook for a further 5 minutes.

Allow to cool and then serve. Note: this will freeze well.

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When the Dog Whisperer Can't Help

Not even Cesar Millan's 'idiot-simple' method could ease Cotton's biting problem. At wit's end, this family turns to the controversial procedure 'canine disarming.'



"The Kriegers have not been able to successfully implement Cesar's technique."

There it is in black and white for all to see, on page 299 of the Dog Whisperer's "Ultimate Episode Guide." The sad truth. Our episode (titled "Raw Cotton") first aired more than two years ago. To this day, whenever I see a rerun, I cringe at the closing scene: me, boasting about Cesar Millan's method being "idiot simple."

How had the 35-pound bouncing ball of fluff become a public menace? Krieger says it wasn't apathy on her part. She enrolled Cotton in puppy classes and basic training at the neighborhood PetSmart. She bought a library of self-help books and videos. Nothing worked.

Apparently, not simple enough for this idiot.

Cotton -- our beloved, 6-year-old American Eskimo -- is still a biter. I suppose he will always be a biter. And, as my lawyer husband keeps reminding me, "a lawsuit waiting to happen." Not that his bites are so powerful: I once had a cat who left comparable fang marks. But the cat didn't lunge at visitors.

How had the 35-pound, bouncing ball of fluff that is our family pet become a public menace? It sure wasn't through apathy on my part. I had tried everything. Puppy classes and basic-training at the neighbourhood PetSmart. A library of self-help books and videos. Even a pricey dog-aggression expert whose Israeli accent made me want to stand at attention. He ordered counter-conditioning and desensitisation drills, supplemented by a low-protein diet and a doggie herbal remedy akin to St. John's Wort.

Nothing worked.

I tried clicker training, high-pitched electronic tones, pepper spray, throwing soda cans filled with rocks. I considered an electric shock collar but worried that in the hands of an amateur (that would be me, the aforementioned idiot) it might do more harm than good.

Finally, I appealed to the fabled Dog Whisperer.

Cesar's efforts were a brilliant success -- until he left our house. For one day, Cotton was the dog I'd always dreamed he could be. Calm and submissive, deferring to the pack leader. Unfortunately, the pack leader was Cesar.

Reluctantly, I looked into shipping Cotton to a dog rescue -- but didn't find one that would take a dog with a history of biting. No chance of ever placing him with a new owner, they explained. Unacceptable liability. Months later, I had a follow-up visit with Cesar at his Dog Psychology Center in South L.A. Surrounded by his spectacularly submissive pack, he accepted my lack of leadership skill and suggested I try a full-time muzzle. I had already tried that and concluded the restraint has yet to be invented that Cotton couldn't wriggle out of.

I considered defanging him, but couldn't find a vet in the area who would do it. Turns out the practice is both unsafe and impractical. To extract a dog's mighty canines would likely lead to a fractured jaw. Even if it didn't, with the canines out of the way, the pointy incisors would be primed to fill the gap.

The only other option seemed to be a lethal injection.

Procrastinating about that difficult decision, I told myself I could avoid future incidents through eternal vigilance. Cotton is protective and territorial: He reserves his animosity for strangers (especially men) who venture up our long, steep driveway. Living on an acre in rustic Rolling Hills Estates, fronted by a country road without sidewalks, with Cotton hemmed in by an invisible fence and crated in the garage whenever company is expected, we should have been able to keep trouble at bay. But trouble kept showing up unexpectedly. There was the time the sheriff's deputy drove up to alert us to a nearby brush fire: For his thoughtfulness, he received torn pants and teeth marks in his shin. Or the time a furniture delivery guy arrived early: He escaped Cotton's toothy embrace only by leaping on the hood of his van. Heck, Cotton even slipped his leash and bit the Times photographer who came to take his picture for this article.

But by then, I had a new plan.

One day while channel surfing, I happened upon an Animal Planet special counting down the world's top 10 "extreme biters." The domesticated dog came in at No. 4. (Hippos and Komodo dragons took the No. 3 and No. 2 spots, with the cookie-cutter shark the undisputed champion.) There, to my delight, was Dr. David Nielsen, a veterinary dentist based in Manhattan Beach, talking about a miracle fix: "canine disarming."

Instead of extracting the four canines, Nielsen cuts away 4 millimetres of tooth using a CO2 laser. He acid-etches the live pulp within, fashions a bell-shaped cavity that he packs with two kinds of human-grade composite, and light-cures the top for a smooth, flat finish. He also blunts the extra set of pointy incisors.

Disarming isn't a new idea, but Nielsen's technique is one he pioneered, though he shares credit with his now-departed pet whippet. The small greyhound had "played Frisbee so much and chewed so hard trying to get out of cages" that he'd busted off all four canines right above the 4-millimeter level, Nielsen says. One day the whippet cornered a technician in Nielsen's office and flew at her face. Instead of tearing flesh, he merely pinched her cheek. The blunted canines blocked even the incisors from their shearing action.

A metaphorical light bulb came on above Nielsen's head. Now he figures he has disarmed some 300 animals in the last dozen years, not all of them dogs. A short while ago, he treated a kitty whose love bites had turned a little too intense. He's also used the procedure, for various reasons, on wolves and a tiger.

Nielsen may be something of a maverick. Dr. Gail Golab, head of the American Veterinary Medical Assn., says that disarming dogs was once fairly common, but that it fell out of favour several years ago as behavioural modification techniques improved. The association is opposed to either tooth removal or disarming, primarily on the grounds that neither addresses the underlying cause of aggression and may lull owners into a false confidence that the animal can no longer inflict injury.

The American Veterinary Dental College agrees that disarming is controversial, but in a position statement adopted in 2005 it endorsed the procedure in "selected cases."

In June, I signed Cotton up. It would cost a pretty penny: \$1,600. But it's easy to see why. Nielsen uses state-of-the-art human dental and surgical techniques. Cotton would be sedated before full intubation under general anaesthesia. He would receive an IV drip of fluid potassium, and technicians would hook him up to a battery of machines monitoring his oxygen level, heart rate and blood pressure. The doctor would consult digital X-rays taken just before the procedure and track his progress with more X-rays along the way. Cotton would get deep scaling before the procedure and a foamy fluoride treatment after. And he would go home with enough antibiotics and pain relievers to last a week. Once he recovered from the surgery, there would be no lasting side effects: Cotton would be able to eat, chew and play normally.

For all the technology, Nielsen says the most profound effect of canine disarming is psychological. "You can see it in their eyes almost the moment they wake up from the anaesthesia," he says. "It's like they're wondering, 'who took away my knives?' " An epiphany that humbles and subdues them for all time. The Bumble from "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" comes to mind. Remember how sweet the ferocious yeti becomes after Hermey, the misfit elf-turned-dentist, does his handiwork?

On the day of Cotton's treatment, another dog -- a 5-year-old pit bull named Jesse -- was also disarmed. Jesse has issues with things that ring. Woe betide anyone who picks up the phone, answers the door or holds a beeping camera in Jesse's presence. Mallory Hartt, 55, of San Pedro, her sons and even their other dog, a Patterdale terrier, all have scars to show for Jesse's peculiar mania.

After the disarming, Jesse was a changed dog. "He just started being silly," Hartt says. "He would jump around like a bunny rabbit. Like he was happy." He hasn't gotten over his ring fetish, and there's already been "a little scuffle" with the terrier. But the important thing, she says, is that the smaller dog emerged from the fray unscathed.

Lynn Morrison, 52, is no less pleased. Morrison had Nielsen disarm Chrissie, one of her five German shepherds, in March after continuing problems that culminated in a trip to the emergency room for her housemate, Judy Johnson, to repair a badly torn calf. "If it wasn't for Dr. Nielsen," says Morrison, "we would have had to euthanize Chrissie, without a doubt."

As for Cotton, he seems to be in denial. When he gets the opportunity, he still pounces at any man who ventures onto our property. A few days after the disarming, our gardener Guadalupe Davila

obligingly offered his booted foot for Cotton's delectation. After 30 seconds of ferocious gnawing, Cotton had only succeeded in lightly scoring the thick leather.

The next day, when Cotton bolted out the door to discover handyman Julio Miranda building a new handrail, he grabbed a mouthful of cedar post. After some unbridled gnawing, he only lightly scored the soft wood.

Cotton has yet to actually chomp on human flesh. If he does, we fervently hope the epiphany Nielsen described will finally take hold. Come to think of it, Cotton does sort of resemble the Bumble.

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Dog Grooming 101

While professional groomers may offer convenience, expertise and a more finished look, your dog can benefit from do-it-yourself grooming, provided you follow some expert advice. Below, Debbie Felder, owner of California-based Bowser's Natural Pet Grooming and a product tester for grooming product company Bamboo Pet, offers tips on home care for your furry friend's coat, skin, nails and teeth.

Brushing

Brushing your dog keeps its coat healthy and lush, stimulates circulation, gets rid of loose hair and keeps mats at bay. Dogs shed more as the seasons change, and brushing every few days may be a good idea at those times. Otherwise, every week or two is sufficient. If your dog is averse to brushing, Felder recommends carrying on a calm conversation with your canine companion as you work. "If you're tense, the dog can feel it," Felder explains. "Take it slow. Tell it to relax. Give your dog a massage while you brush."

She adds, "The best way to groom at home is to elevate your dog, putting it up high, such as on a table. This takes the dog's power away, letting them know you're in charge." The trick to getting rid of excess fuzz is to take off the loose coat first with a brush and then to follow that up with combing, which takes the mats out. A comb with rolling teeth is also a useful tool.

Washing

Bathe your dog every four to six weeks, and always after a good brushing. "A wet coat glues to the skin, so you want to get the loose hairs out first," advises Felder, who also suggests putting cotton in your dog's ears before bathing to keep the water out. "Dogs are afraid of cold water, so never just take them outside and hose them down. Always bathe them in warm water."

Lay out your bathing supplies in advance to streamline the process. These should include a showerhead or pitcher, a diluted commercial shampoo -- to make rinsing easier -- and a towel or blow-dryer for drying. "I recommend shampooing your dog two times per bath," says Felder. "They come out nicer." She also suggests a post-bath comb-out to really finish the look.

Pedicuring

While dogs that spend a lot of time playing in yards and walking along sidewalks may not need regular nail trimming, less-active pooches should have their nails clipped about once a month to avoid overgrowth and even infection. You can buy special dog nail clippers, since human clippers are generally not sharp enough for canines. Felder also recommends using an electric, rotating stone, available at hardware stores. This grinds the animal's nails down so they're not as sharp.

Choose a time when your dog tends to be relaxed. If you do use a clipper, trim only nail tips to avoid cutting into the quick -- the vein that runs into your dog's nails. Avoiding the quick can be hard to do if your dog has black nails, which makes it all the more important to trim only the edge. If you do hit the vein, baking powder or cornstarch should stop the bleeding.

Tooth Cleaning

Dogs need their teeth professionally cleaned twice a year to prevent bacteria travelling from tooth tartar to their hearts. In between professional cleanings, you should also brush at home once or twice a week using a dog toothbrush and toothpaste formulated specially for dogs.

When your dog is sitting on an elevated surface like a table, hold its head firmly and open its mouth with one hand. Move the toothbrush in circular motions, starting in the back and making sure to brush at the gum line. Give your dog a crunchy and delicious treat when you finish, to reward for cooperation and to get that toothpaste taste out of its mouth.

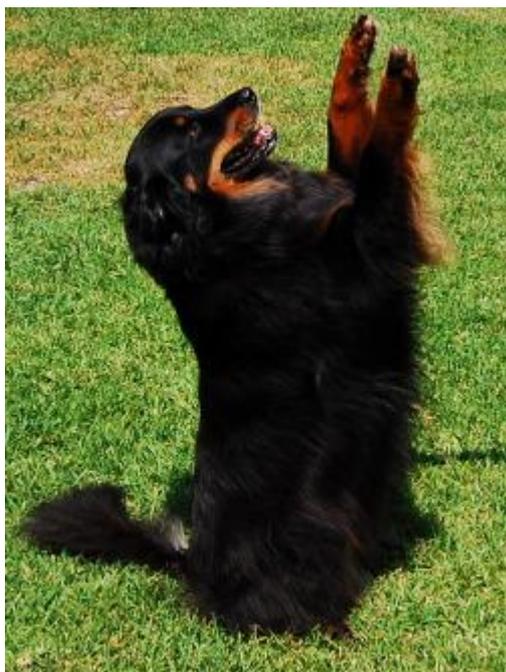
Rules for Good Grooming

- 🗨️ **Keep grooming fun** - approach your dog when you are relaxed and in a good mood. Don't get frustrated. Talk sweetly to your dog throughout.
- 🗨️ **Tread lightly** - learn from the mistakes professional groomers have made. Be gentle with your hands, keep water at a comfortable temperature and don't force your dog to remain in an uncomfortable position for long.
- 🗨️ **Stop sooner rather than later** - if your dog begins to resist you during a brushing or filing session, let it go. Finish another day.
- 🗨️ **Ask for help** - if your dog is being uncooperative or has mats and tartar you can't tackle, consider visiting a local groomer. You might try paying for a certain number of visits and then taking care of the job at home during other times. "Most groomers will be happy to demonstrate good techniques for you if you're having trouble," says Felder. You and your best canine bud can then enjoy the togetherness of grooming time for years to come.

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Dog Training & Punishment

The term punishment seems to be frequently misunderstood as it applies to training and behaviour. Many trainers claim that they do not use punishment to teach dogs, instead using words such as "corrections" and "discipline" to describe their methods. But the real truth is, no matter what you call it, these terms still refer to using some form of punishment.



What punishment is.

The confusion that comes from trying to understand punishment relates to a misunderstanding in the definition. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary punishment refers to "suffering, pain, or loss that serves as retribution" or "severe, rough, or disastrous treatment". With these definitions it is easy to see how so many trainers can claim that they do not use punishment when training dogs.

However, when referring to behaviour and learning, punishment has a very different definition. In this case, punishment simply means anything that causes a behaviour to stop or become less likely. Notice that there is no mention that the punishment has to be harsh, painful, or severe. It does, however, need to be something the dog finds unpleasant.

There are two types of punishment. Positive punishment, which means something is added to reduce the likelihood of a behaviour, and negative punishment, which means something is removed to reduce the likelihood of a behaviour. The remainder of this article will discuss positive punishment, as it is the most frequently misunderstood and misused.

What punishment is not.

Punishment must be contingent on the dog's behaviour. Lashing out at a dog in anger, getting revenge or retribution, or otherwise treating a dog harshly "because he deserved it" are not forms of punishment. These acts do not teach the dog anything (except that humans are scary and unpredictable) so are therefore not punishers in the technical sense. To be considered punishment has nothing to do with how harsh or severe it is, and everything to do with whether it diminishes the target behaviour.

Problems with punishment.

There are a number of reasons why punishment may not be the best way to train dogs. Here are just a few examples.

When trying to stop a problem behaviour punishment must be administered immediately following the behaviour, every single time. This can be somewhat challenging for pet owners. Punishment delivered too late runs the risk of punishing a completely different behaviour and causing confusion and frustration in the dog. When punishment is used inconsistently on a behaviour, many dogs will learn to gamble in the hopes that this time they won't be punished.

While there are forms of punishment that do not hurt the dog physically (such as spray bottles, shake cans, etc.), all punishment is unpleasant to the dog being trained. Many times the effects of the punishment are not outright obvious. Fear, mistrust and frustration can result from using punishment in dog training. This can be damaging to the relationship between pet and owner.

Using punishment can have other unintentional side effects. Dogs will often create negative associations with other things in their environment at the time the punishment was delivered. For instance, a dog that is given a leash jerk every time he looks at another dog may learn to hate the presence of other dogs. For all he knows, those other dogs are the cause of the punishment.

Punishment can actually inhibit learning in some cases. A dog that is punished every time it makes a mistake often becomes reluctant to try anything new. This can make things difficult when trying to teach a new behaviour.

Most importantly, punishment does not teach the dog what you want him to do. While you may have stopped that particular behaviour, unless you train an alternative behaviour to replace the old one, the dog is left trying to figure out what to do instead.

Is there a better way?

Yes! There are many ways that problem behaviour can be solved without the need for punishment.

When it comes to getting rid of unwanted behaviours there are two very useful techniques that can be used, extinction and training an alternate behaviour. Let's take a look at both of these in more detail.

Extinction works on the idea that behaviours that are not reinforced are less likely to be repeated in the future. Let's say you want your dog to stop begging from the table. If you completely stop feeding your dog from the table, then eventually the dog will realize that begging does not work, and will stop doing it. Be aware that this method can backfire, though. If you stop feeding your dog from the table almost all the time, but every so often give them a bit of food, then the dog will learn that persistent begging will eventually pay off. You must remain very consistent for extinction to work.

Extinction typically only works on behaviours that are not self-reinforcing. A self reinforcing behaviour means that the pet is gaining a reward from the behaviour that does not come directly from you. An example of a self reinforcing behaviour would be a dog that digs in the yard. In this case his reward is coming from the environment (maybe a buried toy, the feeling of the cool dirt on his paws, or maybe a nice spot to lie in) and is not likely to change through extinction alone.

The other technique you can use is to teach a different behaviour for the dog to do instead. This behaviour must be incompatible with the behaviour that you want to get rid of. For instance, your dog cannot beg at the table if he is lying quietly on a mat at the other end of the room. In the

example of the digging dog above, you could build him his own digging box with toys and treats buried in it to make it more interesting than digging in the yard, then teach him to dig there instead.

If you are having a behaviour issue with your dog that you are finding difficult to solve, you should not hesitate to contact a professional trainer that practices positive and humane methods.

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How Smart Is Your Dog?

Intelligence is a debatable thing in the canine world. Just what is it that makes a dog intelligent? Is it his ability to learn new tricks and commands, or is it based on obedience or even demonstrating good memory?

In principle, dog intelligence is defined by a dog's ability to solve problems, think and learn. But there are many interpretations as to what makes a dog intelligent. Researchers, breeders and trainers have differing opinions on how exactly one can test a dog's brainpower and comparatively relate it to other dogs. For example, if one dog learns a new trick and another doesn't, does the first dog have superior cleverness or is it simply more subservient? And is the second dog stupid or does it simply choose not to do the trick?

The Siberian Husky is a good example of this. The breed doesn't learn quickly, so if learning quickly were a sign of intelligence then the Husky wouldn't be considered so. Yet many trainers believe that learning quickly is simply a sign of blind subservience and many truly intelligent breeds, like Huskies, aren't interested in pleasing their owners. They show supreme intelligence in their fascination for problem-solving. Huskies have been documented as displaying incredible thought in the many inventive and ingenuous ways to catch and kill small animals.

Ability to Solve Problems

It is widely believed that all dogs inherently have the ability to learn basic obedience, and that it may just take a little more time and patience when trying to train some dogs.

Interestingly, dogs are often given credit for being smart because of their physical attributes rather than their mental ones, such as good eyesight, fast reflexes or speed. Yet most people would agree that intelligence refers to the ability to think and even solve problems and figure things out.

It is also worthwhile noting that some dogs are better at certain things than others. For example, breeds such as Terriers and Chihuahuas are excellent problem-solvers, yet don't do as well with memory or learning. Breeds like Beagles and Retrievers are great at memory and learning, yet not as good at solving problems. But overall, some standout breeds score highly with all of the above, including Poodles, Dobermans, and German Shepherds.

Types of Canine Intelligence

According to Dr Stanley Coren (Professor of Psychology at the University of British Columbia and a prize-winning dog trainer) there are three types of dog intelligence:

Adaptive Intelligence

This is the ability to learn and solve problems. It can be measured by canine IQ tests and is specific to each individual animal. A good example is if your dog recognises a person or command the first or second time, or if it demonstrates an understanding of cause.

Instinctive Intelligence

This relates to skills and behaviour inherent to the breed – programmed into their genetic code and not gained through learning or training. For example, Hounds have a phenomenal sense of smell and tracing ability, and are superb trackers and hunters, whereas Sheepdogs and Collies are excellent herding dogs. Instinctive intelligence is also measured by canine IQ tests.

Working / Obedience Intelligence

This involves your dog's ability to follow commands. This is breed dependent. For example, Labradors are used as guide dogs, German Shepherds as police dogs and Beagles in quarantine work.

Coren has formulated a canine IQ test based on 12 individual tests to measure adaptive intelligence. The test determines the two main components of intelligence: memory and learning ability, and problem solving ability. Coren says that whereas instinctive intelligence is what the dog is bred to do (and therefore can't be compared between breeds) adaptive intelligence is what the dog can "do for itself". The full test is available in Coren's book [The Intelligence of Dogs](#).

Smartest Breeds

So which breeds are considered intelligent and which fall into the dummies list? Here is a look at the widely accepted list in order of intelligence:

1. Border Collie
2. Poodle
3. German Shepherd
4. Golden Retriever
5. Doberman Pinscher
6. Shetland Sheepdog
7. Labrador Retriever
8. Papillon
9. Rottweiler
10. Australian Cattle Dog

And the least intelligent breeds are:

1. Shi Tzu
2. Basset Hound
3. Mastiff
4. Pekinese
5. Bloodhound
6. Borzoi
7. Chow-chow
8. Bulldog
9. Basenji
10. Afghan Hound

Don't despair if your dog doesn't rate in the intelligence rankings. Perhaps it's not such a bad thing to have a Bulldog that takes 8 hours to figure out that you've been gone for the day.

Remember that any dog testing exercises are subjective – your pooch is as individual as the next and has its own unique personality and characteristics. It's also worth the thought that while a Border Collie runs around all day rounding up sheep then has to sleep outside, your darling Chow-chow lies in it's plush bed being brushed, clipped, fed and cuddled – so who's the smartest dog now?

Test your Pooch's Intelligence

You can test your dog's intelligence based on its problem-solving skills and obedience. If it keeps trying to solve a problem, its persistence is a good indicator of brain power.

When it comes to obedience, being able to learn and perform plenty of tricks is a sign of intelligence. Try some of these tricks at home to test his brainpower.

Memory

Take three bowls, turn them upside down and line them up in a row. In full view of your dog, take a treat and place it under one of the bowls, making sure the dog sees which bowl you placed it under.

Turn your dog away from the bowls and hold it for around 10 to 15 seconds, then let go. If it goes straight to the bowl that has the treat under it, you've got a very smart cookie on your hands. If it takes two tries to find the treat, your pooch has average intelligence, and if it takes three goes, Harvard isn't on the horizon.

Problem Solving

Take a decent-sized towel or blanket and throw it gently over your dog's head. If the dog frees itself in less than 15 seconds it's considered extremely clever. If it takes 15 to 30 seconds, your dog is of average intelligence, and if it takes longer than that, well, your pooch isn't too bright (but extremely lovable, we're sure).

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Fun Stuff - Mind Games Dogs Play with Humans

- 🐕 After your humans give you a bath, DON'T LET THEM TOWEL DRY YOU! Instead, run to their bed, jump up and dry yourself off on the sheets. This is especially good if it's right before your human's bedtime.
- 🐕 Act like a convicted criminal. When the humans come home, put your ears back, tail between your legs, chin down and act as if you have done something really bad. Then, watch as the humans frantically search the house for the damage they think you have caused. (Note: This only works when you have done absolutely nothing wrong.)
- 🐕 Let the humans teach you a brand new trick. Learn it perfectly. Then the humans try to demonstrate it to someone else, stare blankly back at the humans. Pretend you have no idea what they're talking about.
- 🐕 Make your humans be patient. When you go outside to go 'pee', sniff around the entire yard as your humans wait. Act as if the spot you choose to go pee will ultimately decide the fate of the earth.
- 🐕 Draw attention to the human. When out for a walk always pick the busiest, most visible spot to go 'poo'. Take your time and make sure everyone watches. This works particularly well if your humans have forgotten to bring a plastic bag.
- 🐕 When out for a walk, alternate between choking and coughing every time a strange human walks by.
- 🐕 Make your own rules. Don't always bring back the stick when playing fetch with the humans. Make them go and chase it once in a while.
- 🐕 Hide from your humans. When your humans come home, don't greet them at the door. Instead, hide from them, and make them think something terrible has happened to you. (Don't reappear until one of your humans is panic-stricken and close to tears).
- 🐕 When your human calls you to come back in, always take your time. Walk as slowly as possible back to the door.
- 🐕 Wake up twenty minutes before the alarm clock is set to go off and make the humans take you out for your morning pee. As soon as you get back inside, fall asleep. (Humans can rarely fall back asleep after going outside, this will drive them nuts!).

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The Weird & the Wonderful

Lost Pooch Found After 9 Years



A Brisbane dog that went missing from its owners nine years ago has been found alive - in Melbourne.

RSPCA Victoria officers rescued the badly-neglected pooch from a backyard in the southern capital while investigating a possible animal cruelty case last week.

To their amazement, they discovered the dog was micro chipped and were

able to track down her original owners.

Muffy, as she is called, vanished from the home of her Brisbane owner Chloe Rushby, 17, nine years ago. They will be reunited in Brisbane next week.

Ms Rushby was only eight years old when Muffy disappeared. Her mother Natalie Lampard said the family, which now lives on the Gold Coast, had given up hope.

"I left Muffy with a friend to look after...and she wandered off," she told ABC Radio. "I never thought she'd come back. it's unbelievable."

"I'd say she's about 13, 14 (years old now)"

Ms Lampard said inspectors in Victoria had contacted her with the amazing news.

"The RSPCA left a message on my phone...they had a dog that had been micro chipped in my name. I rang them and realised it was Muffy.

"(Chloe) can't believe it, she's over the moon. They were inseparable."

How Muffy came to be living in a squalid yard 2000 kilometres from her home is a mystery.

The couple who owned the yard, currently under investigation, told inspectors they had found her as a stray.

RSPCA Queensland spokesman Michael Beatty said it was likely she had been picked up in Queensland and had been taken to Victoria.

"It would be very unusual for a dog to travel that far on it's own. The whole thing is unusual, really,".

"The original owners obviously did the right thing by having her micro chipped in the first place. It wouldn't have been done too often nine years ago."

Tim Pilgrim, of RSPCA Victoria, said Muffy was suffering from a skin condition when she was found but was being well cared for in a Melbourne shelter.

"Inspectors went out to have a look (at the property) and her owners surrendered her as she wasn't doing too well," Mr Pilgrim said.

"She's doing fantastic now.

"We're looking at sending her back to Brisbane by Monday or Tuesday."

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