

Lesson Six Homework: Exceptions Verses Rules in Dog Training

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Exceptions:

- Exceptions in training are always spoken -- the dog trainer prompts the dog to perform a permitted or commanded behavior.
- Exceptions apply to a trainer's applied control and permission.
- ALL permission prompts overriding behavioral rules are exceptions:
 - "Jump up" -- allowing a permitted visit to the otherwise off-limits lap.
 - "Dirt Devil" -- allowing permitted eating of food outside the dog's bowl.
 - "Good" -- allowing permitted eating of food from a hand.
 - "Let's go" -- allowing a permitted pass through a permanent boundary.
- ALL obedience restraint commands are exceptions:
 - "Gate" -- disallowing passage between rooms the dog normally has free run of; on the dog's side of the boundary, freedom still applies. Command "OK" plus accompaniment across temporary boundary line allows dog to revert back to the rule of free passage between both rooms.
 - "Wait" -- disallowing movement away from a designated area when normally the dog can move about freely; the dog's attention is disengaged (dog may space out or sleep) and dog should be passive. "OK" plus accompaniment away from the area allows the dog to have back its freedom.
 - "Stay" -- disallowing movement away from a designated area as well as disallowing any position changes; attention is engaged, and dog is "ready for action!" "OK" or any other obedience command can be given from a distance to release dog--either allowing the dog to revert back to freedom, or requiring the dog to stay in "exception mode"--still performing.
 - "Place" -- disallowing movement away from a remote area; dog is sent to, and expected to remain upon, "bed" until release--"OK" plus accompaniment -- is given.

Rules:

- Rules in training are always silent -- the dog trainer allows the dog to learn what it may always, or may never, do without prompting or permission.

- Rules apply to a dog's self control and conduct:

Never -- jump into my lap without permission; no "off" commands are used.

Never -- cross a permanent boundary without permission; no "stay" command is used.

Never -- take food from the floor or a person's hand without permission; no "leave it" command is used.

Always -- consider yourself free until a command is given that overrides freedom.

- Behaviors you would like your dog to always do freely, unless you say "yes" or "no" in some manner will be taught as rules.
- Understanding the difference between exceptions and rules in dog training can be challenging, but once you get it, it makes perfect sense!