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Upcoming Events

Remember to come out to our Show and Goes for Agility and Obedience to refine you and your dog's skills.

Agility	Obedience
	Sunday, September 23, 2012
Sunday, October 21, 2012 (Fair Hill)	Sunday, October 28, 2012
Sunday, November 18, 2012	Sunday, November 25, 2012
Sunday, December 16, 2012	Sunday, December 23, 2012

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Our next session of classes start September 24th, 2012.

If you are looking for more show and goes please see the [events section on the Academy Blog](#).

Tug-a-licious

My dog is, as one would say. Tug-a-Licious. Yet, I am still training my dog to Tug.

Many may ask: training to tug? Some people don't know that this is a trained behavior, not something that your dog has or does not have.

I hear all the time "My dog doesn't tug". Yet, this is something that can be developed through training.

So why tug? Is it just an agility thing?

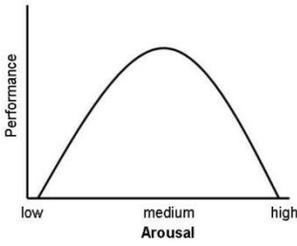
Tugging is a great training reward, a good way to foster greater focus from your dog, and a way to increase arousal.

Arousal is not something specific to Agility, if your dog is not in the right state of arousal, they will not be at peak performance for any dog sport. At peak performance, the dog has focus for you, and their work. When under aroused, a dog can notice all of his/her surroundings, sniff, visit people or wander. While people in agility may want higher arousal than some other dog sports, everyone, wanting their dogs to perform, needs to manage arousal.

Training to Tug is not a science, it's an art. You need to find a motivator for your dog.

- Take a toy like a rope bone or a flappy, or something that has a lot of motion, and flap it around on the floor, play with it to get your dog interested. Don't worry about how silly you look; the more fun you have, the more interested your dog is.
- Does your dog like balls? Tie a ball to a string and throw it holding the end of the string.

- If your dog loves food, there are tugs, which have food pockets, so your dog will grab on because of the food smell.
- Hounds, and other hunting dogs, may like furry objects.



As you get interest and clasping you build intensity, through the opposition reflex. You are pulling forward, the dog is pulling back. As the value builds for tugging, better tugging occurs. To build drive you can also play with the toy out of reach of your dog, when they let go. Then try to tug again, this should arouse interest.

Where I am with Kody is: training to tug in stressful environments. At an agility trial, Kody refuses to tug near the ring. How I and others can train around that is: to back up from where he can't tug to find out where he can. The more times you ask for this the less space it should take, because the value for tugging is being re-built in that environment.

If this doesn't work, you can put a treat where the dog won't tug (the dog should see this) and again back up from that point till the dog offers tugging. Once you get tugging have a party with your dog and go back to give them the treat. The idea is response cost, your dog wants the treat, and learns the longer it takes him/her to tug, the longer it will be before they get their treat.

Hope to see you and your dog tugging soon.

Training Challenge

Do you want a challenge to increase your dog's mental stimulation? Shaping can do that! This month's shaping challenge is to teach your dog "Put his/her head down".

What do you need?

1. Your Dog
2. Clicker or verbal cue like yes.
3. Treats and / or tug toy
4. Floor or object to put head on

This exercise is good for dogs that are over aroused. Unlike the Tug-a-licious article the other end of the spectrum dogs can stress up in some circumstances. By teaching your dog to put his/her head down you

can help instill calm, while completing a job/cue. This can bring your dog back to peak performance when the arousal is too high on the arousal curve.

Two possible ways of training this are with a target, or through offered behavior.

In option 1: Ask your dog to go into a down then put a target on the floor. This target should not be associated with any other previous behavior: maybe a phone book or a stool. Click or verbally reward any behavior that your dog's head is close to or touching the target. Keep upping the criteria till your dog's head is laying on the target.

Option 2: you wait out your dog till they move their head to put it down then reward. The first time may take 5 mins the second 2 mins, and then the

dog will catch on the head down is getting the rewards.

Finally, add your verbal cue to the behavior once you have exactly what you want. To do this you'll say the new Cue (I use Head down).

Things to remember:

1. Set your criteria before starting
2. Set your dog up for success
3. If you want to build duration, reward while they have their head down at a high rate, and then incorporate a release cue.
4. Break up your sessions, keep sessions short and give him/her breaks within the session
5. Above all else, have fun with your dog!



Academy Brags

The last couple of months, as always, have been great for students at the Academy of Dog Training and Agility. Our dedicated dogs, handlers, and instructors show that the Academy is a great place to train and they deserve to be recognized:

Agility

- Kody and Kristin Anderson received their Novice STD Title NA (AKC). Kody turned 2 in June, and has been training at the Academy for 1.5 years. Kody is an Australian Shepherd.
- Hailey and Gail Muenster received a 1st place in Open Std. at a recent trial. Hailey is a Papillion.
- Flash and Jen Slivka earned their CPE C-ATCH and their AKC OA titles. Flash is an American Eskimo dog.

Obedience / Show Handling

- Jack and William B Algee earned his UD title in Obedience. Jack is the first Giant to receive both the Grand Champion conformation title and the Utility Dog obedience title.
- Dewey and Sue Schneider Won First place in their Novice Rally Class with 100 points. Dewey is an Entlebucher Mountain Dog.
- Piper received Best Veteran Sweep, Award of Merit and Select at the Midwest Whippet Specialty.

Join me in Congratulating these dogs, owners, and handlers on their great performances, and wishing them continued success in the future.

Also, join me in congratulating the instructors that have helped each along the way.

If you have brags you would like to include in the next issue of the newsletter, please post them on [the Bags page of our blog](#), put them on the Academy's chalkboard or contact me at Kristin@acdemyofdogtraining.com.



Photo courtesy of Rich Knetch

Save the Dates (October 18-21, 2012)

One of the biggest events for the Academy of Dog Training and Agility every year is the Fair Hill International.



The Fair Hill International is an International Horse Show (October 18-21). So what does a Horse Show have to do with Dog Agility? The Academy is part of the Fair Hill Festival. The Festival offers different activities for those coming out to see the Horse Show Events. Over 4 days The Academy will perform demos and hands on mini instruction for the public. Ending with the October 21st agility show and go (all runs are free, but pre-registration is required).

What do we need? We need **YOU!** We need volunteer dogs and handlers of all levels to show the public what we do at the Academy, to give everyone a show, and to help teach new dogs how to do a small jump or a straight tunnel. This is a wonderful opportunity to have training time and fun with your dog.

What we have? We will have a 20' X 20' tent for our information and videos of the Swimming Paws Canine Swim Club and a 100' X 100' fenced area with Bleacher seating for the Agility Demos!

See the [Academy's Events Tab on their Website](#) for more information. Hope to see everyone there!

There's still a Job Opening at the Academy

If you haven't seen it on the Academy website the Academy is looking for a few good people:

The Academy needs a few well qualified people to aid in group instruction in Obedience, Agility and all other classes we provide.

Well qualified means:
Experience in Competition Obedience, (CD AND

CDX, ETC.), Rally Obedience, Treibball, Nosework, or any of the above.

Great people skills are required, and previous experience is a big plus. All Academy Staff perks will be provided (e.g. Free Club Membership, Clothing, Swimming, Classes, Pre-Approved Seminar Fees in

related classes and Travel compensation for class time).

Please pass this along to anyone that you know who may be interested. More information is available on the Academy Website or Contact Don Brown with further questions at 302-588-4636.

Recent Blog Articles

[There's a great big world out there](#) – Operant Conditioning and Reinforcement.

[The Space Between: Dog and Handler's Journey to Trialing](#) – How to feel comfortable going from class to trialing.

Feed back

What did you think about this addition of the Academy Times? What would you like to see going forward? We can only improve, if we know what's on your mind. We will strive to cater our information to you.

Please send all feedback to Kristin@Academyofdogtraining.com or use the feedback tool available on the [Academy site](#).

