



## Things to Look for in a Trainer

Congratulations on the adoption of your new canine companion! As a responsible pet guardian you want to assure your canine companion has good manners. Training and obedience is a great way to socialize and train your pet. But before you and your dog go to class you need to do your homework to make sure the trainer you pick is right for you and your pet.

### What to Look for:

- A trainer who treats dogs and owners with respect
- A trainer who uses treat-based, positive-reinforcement techniques
- A trainer who uses a good fitting harness, the Gentle Leader head collar, Easy Walk Harness, or other non-choking, non-shocking training collars
- A trainer who teaches the owner what to do and how to do it
- Classes where dogs and owners are having fun
- Classes where dogs and owners are learning new things
- A trainer who uses a variety of non-aversive techniques
- Training that is tailored to the individual dog
- A program that allows the dog to progress at its own speed and that doesn't force him/her into situations where he/she isn't comfortable
- A trainer who applies basic learning theory correctly

### What to Avoid:

- A trainer who uses correction collars (choke, prong, shock) as a primary way to train
- A trainer who uses harsh/repeated commands
- A trainer who hits the dog with hands, leash, feet
- A trainer who 'hangs' the dog
- A trainer who takes the dog away to their own facility for "boot camp"
- A trainer who says that an owner is "loving too much" or is "being too soft"
- A class where dogs appear generally anxious: ears back, tail down, panting, lip-licking, yawning
- Classes where owners appear generally anxious
- A trainer who follows a dominance-based training model

**Look for a trainer who is certified. Take time to visit various trainers.**

Certification Council for Dog Trainers – CCPDT

See <http://www.ccpdt.org> for more information

For more behavior information: [www.petsforlife.org](http://www.petsforlife.org) and/or [www.AVSABonline.org](http://www.AVSABonline.org)