

The following article, *5 Star Behaviour Improvers*, is from the magazine *PETS*, dated Nov/Dec. 1999. Within this article, you will find a panel of experts rating, and sometimes berating, 19 techniques and products that you can use to give your pet that finishing school personality.

Below you will find the credentials of the panel of experts. I have taken it amongst myself to include my own. On each subject you will find the comments made by the magazines 5 experts. You will then find mine. You may not like what you hear, but you are going to hear it.

### ***5 Star Behaviour Improvers***

What are the best ways to get your recalcitrant pooch to mend his ways? Are the old-fashioned methods your parents used on the family dog tried and true? Or have they gone out of favour among modern trainers and behaviourists? To find out, we asked a panel of five esteemed veterinarians, behaviourists, and trainers to evaluate 19 tricks for improving your dog's behaviour.

What becomes clear when looking at the results is that there is no single magic cure for misbehaving dogs, though some methods were universally praised by our panellists (like the head halter), while others were given a collective growl (like swatting your dog with a rolled up newspaper).

Each panellist was asked to rate the behaviour modifier on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 equals ineffective and 5 equals very effective. No stars at all indicate complete disapproval. An N/A indicates that the panellist did not provide a response for this particular method.



**Doug Morrison** a world recognized Canadian leader in the training of specialized working dogs. He is one of only two Dog Masters to ever receive accreditation by the United Nations as a handler authorized to utilize explosive detection dogs (EDD) for mine detection and clearance.

Mr. Morrison began his career as a Constable with the Vancouver City (British Columbia, Canada) Police Department's Dog Squad in the early 1970s. During that time, he and his dog "partner", Donner, achieved numerous awards for the Vancouver City

Police Department. In their off duty time, the “partners” entered and won numerous international obedience, agility and tracking trials. During the 1980s, Mr. Morrison owned and operated one of Canada’s largest security companies, specializing in mobile patrol dogs. All dogs were trained in tracking, evidence searches, building searches, area searches and scent discrimination.

Never one to turn down a challenge, Mr. Morrison became involved with the mine detection program being operated by the Canadian government in the late 1990’s, which resulted in a stint of duty in Kosovo in 2000 as a member of the NOTRA/CIDA mine clearance program. Upon his return, Mr. Morrison was honoured by numerous agencies and organizations for his humanitarian efforts in Kosovo. Recently, Doug has just returned from Sri Lanka where he used his expertise with the landmine problem caused by the Tsunami to assist MFP with their Landmine Detection Dog Training program.

Mr. Morrison founded and established DOUG MORRISON K-9 DEVELOPMENT and the CANADIAN CAREER CANINE CENTRE, one of Canada’s largest family oriented dog training schools. He currently has franchises throughout Canada, as well as one in Japan. As a frequently featured expert, Mr. Morrison was never one to step back from controversy or from offering his own opinion on numerous subjects, and appeared in the Ottawa Citizen newspaper regularly.

Doug is always ready to perform community services and has been involved in several community business symposia. He remains dedicated to providing common sense knowledge and in depth assistance to all dog owners in his never ending quest to provide a long, healthy and mutually beneficial relationship between man and dog. With his endless array of amusing antidotes Doug has earned the admiration and affection of his peers, colleagues and clients. Working in the private sector and with government agencies, Mr. Morrison is considered by his peers and throughout the world as a leading expert with dogs in many different fields of training. He has developed a unique method of training and has inquiries from around the world seeking his advice. Organizations and private citizens in Italy, Japan, Jamaica, Virgin Islands, the United States, Sri Lanka, and Canada are using his services. His professional dog trainer’s course has world known graduates now working in the dog industry around the globe.

The following is an overview of Mr. Morrison’s vast expertise:

- 42 years of dog training experience, including 3 yrs. Royal Canadian Air Force military police, 10 yrs. Vancouver City Police Department (V.C.P.D.), specializing in the Police Dog Squad as Dog Master/Trainer.
- Trained and implemented the first drug detection dog for civilian use in Ottawa, ON
- Member of IEDDA International Explosive Detection Dog Association
- Trained Canada’s first mold detection dog. Mold Alert Dogs (MAD) provides dogs to detect and identify mold in homes, busses, schools, hospitals, ships, etc.
- Tour of duty in Kosovo as a Mine Detection Dog Handler

- Humanitarian tour of duty to Sri Lanka as a consultant to Mine Free Planet (MFP)
- Certified by the United Nations as a Mine Detection Dog Handler/Trainer
- Contracted by NOTRA Environmental Corporation (Ottawa) to train 4 mine detection dogs in accordance with United Nations regulations as a pilot program
- Executive Director of Canadian Landmine Detection Dog Society
- Executive Director for Mold Alert Dogs
- Guide Dog for the Blind Trainer and Instructor
- Hearing Ear Dog Trainer and Instructor
- Narcotics Dog Trainer and Instructor
- Mine Detection, Explosives and Search & Rescue Trainer/Instructor
- Therapy Dog Instructor
- Certified by the Canadian Courts as an Expert Witness to provide opinionated evidence for court cases
- Founder and trainer for Canada's largest dog security company
- Featured radio / TV /newspaper personality
- Featured author of numerous newspaper/magazine articles
- Conducted world's largest obedience class (106 dogs)
- Founder of Canada's Super Dog course
- Graduate of New England Dog Training Association sponsored by Cornell University for Canine Behaviour Disorders
- Has trained in excess of 25,000 dogs worldwide
- Consultant to Municipal Bylaw Officers re handling of aggressive dogs
- Inspector for S.P.C.A.
- Author

## OUR PANEL OF EXPERTS:



**Krista Cantrell** a cognitive animal behaviourist and Qigong practitioner, draws on her skills in behaviour modification, traditional Chinese medicine, empathic listening, Animal Energetic bodywork, and body-mind techniques. She works with dogs, horses, and cats. Veterinarians, trainers, family pet owners, and show people seek her help for behaviour and health problems that cannot be solved using traditional training or medical methods. She teaches PlaySMART dog classes, works with her client animals, and specializes in obedience and agility.

She has a training video called *Wanted Good Dog: Catch Your Dog Doing Something Right* and is the author of the dog-training book *Catch Your Dog Doing Something Right: How to Train Any Dog in Five Minutes a Day* (Plume, 1998). Her second dog book will be out in February, 2000. She lives in Arizona's High Sonoran Desert with her husband Jeff, six horses, one dog, and one cat.



**Dr. Ian Dunbar** is a veterinarian, animal behaviourist, an author of numerous books and videos on dog behaviour and training, including *How to Teach a New Dog Old Tricks*, and the *Sirius Puppy Training*, *Training the Companion Dog*, and *Dog Training for Children* videos. Dr. Dunbar received his veterinary degree and Special Honours degree in physiology from the Royal Veterinary Collage (London) and a doctorate in animal behaviour from the University of California, Berkeley.

Via hundreds of lectures over the past 25 years, Dr. Dunbar has popularized the notions of puppy socialization classes, temperament training, and dog-friendly lure/reward training methods. Since 1986, he has conducted over 700 days of seminar and workshops for trainers and veterinarians around the world. There are very few trainers and behaviourists who have not been influenced by Dr. Dunbar's "fun and games from the animal's point of view" training philosophy. In 1993, Dr. Dunbar founded the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT), which is now the largest association of professional trainers in the world.



**Dr. Myrna Milani** is a veterinary behaviourist, teacher, and author of one veterinary text and seven books for the public on companion animal behaviour and the human/animal bond. In addition to her most recent dog and cat books, *DogSmart* and *CatSmart*, which take a preventive, wellness approach to pet ownership, she's written *Preparing for the Loss of Your Pet*, a book designed for pet owners to read at the best of times so they can face the loss of a pet without regrets no matter when and how the loss occurs.



**Terry Ryan** is the owner of Legacy Dog Training, a dog training and behaviour seminar and writing business, and president of Legacy by Mail, a mail-order catalogue for dog-training products. A community dog obedience instructor since 1968, Ryan presents seminars through the United States, and abroad, including extensive teaching in Japan and Australia. She is the author of *The Toolbox for Remodelling Your Problem Dog* (Simon & Schuster, 1998).



**John Wright, Ph.D.** is a professor of psychology at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. A pioneer in the field of applied animal behaviour, Dr. Wright has been making house calls for more than 16 years. He has lectured and presented workshops for organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States and the American Veterinary Medical Association. He has published many works on animal behaviour and is coauthor, with Judi Wright Lashnits, of *The Dog Who Would Be King* (Rodale, 1999) and *Is Your Cat Crazy?* (Macmillan, 1996).

### **Alpha Rollover**

Based on the concept that dominant wolves roll subordinate wolves onto their backs as a means of discipline, the alpha roll is a way to show your dog that you're the boss, according to proponents of this technique. One version involves placing the dog in a "down" position, grasping him by the scruff of the neck, and rolling him over onto his back. A similar approach is to roll the dog onto his side and simultaneously hold down his bottom back leg with your other hand (placing that arm across the dog's neck to keep his head down should he want to raise it).

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar** ★

**Milani** ★★

**Ryan** ★

**Wright** ★★

**Average score: 1.2 stars**

"There is a significant difference between domination and leadership," says Cantrell. "Rollovers focus the dog's attention on muscle power, not brain power." She points out that in the wild, the alpha dog does not roll the other dog over. Rather, the more submissive dog volunteers the behaviour.

Milani echoes these sentiments. "Although I realize that putting the animal in a submissive position communicates a strong message with regard to the owner's feelings about the perceived canine wrong, it does nothing to teach the dog the right response in the same situation. Whenever possible, I prefer to alter negative behaviour by presenting the dog with a positive behaviour to perform instead".

Because the technique can be dangerous (to the human) when performed on an adult dog, Milani calls it "the absolute last thing I'd recommend an inexperienced person do with an unfamiliar dog".

Dunbar also emphasizes the danger of the technique. "Without a doubt, the alpha rollover has provoked more dog bites and aggression and caused the death of more dogs than parvo or distemper," he says.

**Morrison** ★

WOW, I can't believe this..... I agree with the panel of experts. Not the brightest technique to be used.

### **Anti-Bark Collar (Electronic)**

The electronic anti-bark collar gives the dog a mild shock when triggered by the vibration of the barking dog's vocal chords.

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar**

**Milani**

**Ryan N/A**

**Wright ★★**

**Average score: 0.5 star**

Shock collars are shockingly unpopular with the panelists. Dunbar does not mince words in expressing his distain for this method. Rating the electronic anti-bark collar a "minus 10," he says simply, "shock collars are barbaric." Rather than shocking the dog, he suggests training the animal to behave appropriately or managing the problem so that it does not annoy others. "Shock collars shock the poor dog for barking. Would we shock a canary for singing? A baby for crying? Then why fry the poor dog for acting like a dog?"

Train without pain, advises Cantrell. "I could never recommend a product that causes pain. I prefer to train with brain, not pain. There is always a way to overcome a problem without inflicting pain, as long as the handler is willing to spend the time."

Milani comments that shock collars are often used by the least experienced trainers. "I know some people that say if these collars are used in conjunction with good training, they hasten the training process and that the dog wears them only a short time. However, in my experience, those who use these devices typically aren't trainers with a sound knowledge of canine behaviour but rather those seeking a quick fix." But, she says, barking isn't a problem that lends itself to a quick fix. As a result, "such devices may create false owner expectations rather than solve any problems."

**Morrison ★★★★★**

Wake up and smell the roses, we are living in a real world. A world that requires the vast majority of us to work, and be away from home 10-12 hours per day. Typical example:

You live in an apartment. You arrive home Friday night after work and find there is a second barking notice under your door. There have been complaints re barking, if there is another complaint, eviction notice will take place. By the time you contact someone for help and make an appointment, it is now Sunday, at the earliest. **QUESS WHAT?** That's right, you have to go to work on Monday morning.

Mr. DUNBAR says they are barbaric. He further states, why would we shock a canary for singing? A baby for crying? Then why would we fry a poor dog for acting like a dog. What an asinine remark. A dog barking for the sake of barking is NOT normal for a dog. It is a learned behaviour problem caused by the owners. Secondly, the shock collar does NOT fry the dog. Wake up you guys...

MILANI says they are used for a quick fix. HEY, guess what, that's exactly what we are looking for, a quick fix, so she doesn't have to be evicted. What would you do, enrol the lady and dog in a 10 week obedience program?

### **Bitter Apple-Type Sprays**

An unpleasant tasting spray or paste available through pet supply stores or catalogues, Bitter Apple is used to stop dogs from inappropriate chewing. You apply it to articles that you don't want your dog to put his mouth on more than once.

**Cantrell** ★★

**Dunbar** ★★

**Milani** ★★

**Ryan** ★★★★★

**Wright** ★★★★★

**Average score: 2.6 stars**

One of the problems with Bitter Apple is that it doesn't taste bad to all dogs. Some dogs even may seem to enjoy the taste! But it can function effectively as a remote punisher, says Wright. "It has the advantage of letting the dog know 'this item leaves an unpleasant taste in my mouth, and my owner is gone...guess it's something to avoid whether mom is watching me or not!'" Wright comments that Bitter Apple and sprays like it seems to be most effective when sprayed on items the dog has just started to chew, where a chewing habit has not yet been formed.

"This product rarely works unless you daub the entire house" says Dunbar. Rather than punishing the dog for choosing the wrong thing to chew, Dunbar suggests giving him the right thing to chew. "Just stuff a couple of Kongs with the dog's daily allotment of kibble and a couple of liver treats. In no time, the dog will become a Kongaholic and will want to limit his chewing activities accordingly." (A Kong is a hollow rubber toy-see the "Interactive Toys section for more details.)

Ryan points out that the Bitter Apple can be effective in stopping dogs from obsessively licking or chewing on themselves. But not always. "For some dogs, the pleasure of chewing overshadows the unpleasant taste."

**Morrison** ★★★★★

Like so many techniques, it doesn't work for all dogs. Once the dog has the habit of chewing, the more difficult the behaviour is to stop. If it works ... GREAT

### **Citronella Collar**

This collar emits a burst of citronella (the same strong lemony scent that is used to repel mosquitoes) when stimulated by the vibration of the dog's vocal chords as the dog barks. Most dogs find that citronella burst unpleasant and stop barking to stop the bursts.

**Cantrell** ★

**Dunbar** ★★★★★★

**Milani** ★★

**Ryan** ★★★★★

**Wright** ★★★★★

**Average score: 2.8 stars**

Dunbar, who would give the citronella collar 10 stars in our rating system if we would let him, calls it "an extremely effective, humane alternative for teaching barking dogs to shush, especially when the owner is not interested in training the dog to shush."

Milani comments that the citronella collar isn't well suited for dogs who bark out of boredom or frustration, or for the dogs who feel in charge of their owners or property. "Like all training aids," she says, "citronella collars simply remove the sign of the problem; they do nothing to address the underlying cause of the barking." Further, a dog who is devoted to barking to establish and protect his territory might just be stressed by the collar and dissipate his tension another way-by digging, for example, or chewing on himself. Then "the owner winds up with two problems."

Wright points out that while the citronella collar is effective, it's only part of the anti-barking solution. "For best results, the dog should be involved in a training program where the reduction of barking is praised and the dog is taught to do something else instead of bark-'like come get me', or 'go to the house', or 'sit/stay'-for which he is praised."

### **Morrison**

It sounds wonderful, doesn't it? It's GARBAGE. A total waste of money.

### **Clicker Training**

This training method uses primarily positive reinforcement-a plastic and metal clicker (or another sound or word)-to let the dog know exactly what behaviour is desired. The click, which is followed by a treat or another reward, acts as a precise marker of a specific moment in time.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 4 stars**

This method is particularly good for teaching your dog how to perform specific behaviours, from sitting to sequences of tricks, says Wright. "The most intriguing aspect of clicker training is that you can teach a dog to heel without a leash or collar," he says. The timing of when to click is important and can get tricky. "Once you have the technique down, however, it can be a very effective tool for teaching the dog skills." Wright feels that clicker training isn't well suited for solving behavioural problems that have a lot of emotion associated with them (on the part of the dog), or those that occur in the owner's absence.

Timing and accessibility are the keys to successful clicker training, says Cantrell. "A clicker must be within easy reach at all times. Inattentive, distracted, or slow handlers can miss good behaviour or mark incorrect behaviour."

Dunbar prefers a verbal "good dog" to a mechanical clicker, but applauds the principles of clicker training. "The reward-training principles of clicker training are excellent; they're easy, efficient, effective, and enjoyable. But the use of an extra gizmo complicates things," he says. "Clicker training is suitable for teaching basic manners and for preventing and treating all behaviour problems, especially fearfulness and aggression."

Milani says that the clicker training is good for teaching a wide variety of behaviours to dogs who already recognize human leadership. "Many serious behavioural

problems result from a lack of leadership in the human-canine pack,” she says. “Unfortunately, there’s a long standing belief that dogs who respond well in clicker obedience, or agility training automatically respect their owners. Although this may be true in many cases, there are also many cases in which dogs respond beautifully to these different techniques simply because they enjoy them.” In other words, the dogs perform well because they want to, not because their owners want them to. The true measure of a dog’s training, she says, is what the dog does when the owner wants him to do something he doesn’t want to do.

### **Morrison**

Read the first line. They say this training method uses primarily positive reinforcement. What ever happened to “good boy” and a pat on the head, or a big hug and kiss? I always thought that was positive reinforcement also. **YOU HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF THIS QUESTION:** Do you want your dog to come to you because of a clicker or treat, or to come to you because he wants to please you? It’s your choice. I want my dog to come to me and play with me because we are having fun. Compare this to a family life. If you would like your son to do a job for you, do you bribe him with the promise of a new bike?

I really don’t want to waste any more of my time expanding on this.

### **Crate Training**

A crate is a plastic or wire cage that you can confine your dog in for limited periods of time. It is commonly used as a house training tool, under the principle that a dog won’t soil his den.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 3.8 stars**

The crate has become increasingly accepted as a tool for house training and for keeping dogs out of trouble. It’s perhaps becoming too well accepted, and to the point of overuse, according to our panelists. The crate is “excellent for house training, chew-toy training, and teaching your dog to become quieter and calmer when left alone at home,” says Dunbar. But the biggest drawback of the crate, he says, is that it is misused “as a prison” by so many owners.

Cantrell agrees that the crate is “an excellent tool when used in combination with training for teaching house-training.” However, “confinement is not a solution for behaviour problems such as a hyperactivity and digging.” Instead of just confining the dog, she says, people need to direct a dog’s energy in positive ways, such as daily walks, agility training, or body work to make them calm.

Wright says that a crate may be used as an option for confining a dog for short periods of time. “I’ve found it to be useful to teach dogs to ‘go there’ when they need to control themselves, reduce the amount of stimulation they’re getting, or retreat to a safe zone when they feel threatened. Keeping the cage door open should be the goal.” But he

cautions against using the crate inappropriately as a “jail” as part of a daily routine. This is particularly difficult when the dog is crated for longer than he can comfortably control his biological urges (especially for puppies) and when the dog isn’t given an appropriate amount of exercise.

Milani points out that the crate training makes travelling much easier for dogs, “to say nothing of seeking shelter with it in times of natural disaster (a problem that seems to face more pet owners every year).” But, she says, “if used improperly, its can precipitate disaster.” Milani suggests that dog owners who work and can’t get home regularly to walk a pup who isn’t house trained use a use a combination of a crate and exercise pen containing paper, specially treated pads, or a litter box filled with sod (a suggestion she credits to Dr. Dunbar). This way, “the dog becomes accustomed to its crate as a safe haven, and the owners can limit any destruction or mess in their home.”

### **Morrison ★★★★★**

Without a doubt, the greatest invention in the canine world. This method is great for house training. Most families are away from home during the day, and unless you are going to quit your job to stay home, or buy new furniture on a regular basis, start crating your dog.

A new pup needs a lot of sleep. Lack of sleep can cause the pup to be irritable and aggression problems can start. MILANI and DUNBAR suggest a combination, to limit any destruction or mess in the house. HELLO! I don’t want any destruction, and especially a mess in my house. A crate is also a great tool to help out with your sanity. Remember the days when we would put our child in a play pen? Why? Because the play pen was an artificial way of controlling the child while you have something else to do. It kept the baby safe. Isn’t the play pen the same as a crate? Or should I say, isn’t the crate the same as the play pen.

### **Food Rewards**

This involves using food to reward the dog’s behaviour or lure him to do what you want.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 4.2 stars**

Dunbar loves food rewards and would give those 10 if our rating system allowed.

“Nothing beats the sheer effectiveness and enjoyment of using food lures and rewards in training,” he says. “Other rewards are wonderful, but food works best.” He points out that the food needn’t cause weight gain, since the dog’s daily allotment of food can be used.

Wright agrees. “Food is a great motivator and can be used in conjunction with other reinforces (praise, ‘happy words’, etc.) during training,” he says.

Milani begs to differ. “I don’t use food training my self because I’ve seen the negative effects that assigning emotion to food can have in the medical as well as behavioural arena, but I do know trainers who use it very effectively. However, all of these trainers are adamant that the treats be phased out of the training very quickly. When the owner’s beliefs allow him to do this, no problems arise. But owners who continue

rewarding the dog long after it knows a command are basically ensuring that the dog never learns it.”

### **Morrison**

Basically I agree with MILANI. Many people use food and clickers as a way to motivate their dog. A good trainer/instructor should know how to teach their students and to teach them how to motivate their dog in order to please each other. Do your research. Food training can be a contributing factor for aggression.

All food trainers say they always wean their dogs off the treat. Then why is it that their dogs are 7 and 8 and 9 years of age and still using food? Then there are the favourite tricks that trainers use:

- 1) Instead of holding a treat in their hand they pretend to hold one. This is still food training!
- 2) Then there is the guy that wants to show off to his friends just how obedient his dog is. He takes some wieners, put them in his pocket and rubs the wieners in the pocket and then takes them out. Now the dogs face is glued to Come on you people, give your head a shake. You shouldn't own a dog, maybe a gold fish.

### **Head Halter**

A head halter (marketed under names like Gentle Leader, Halti, and Snoot Loop) is used in lieu of or in conjunction with a neck collar. It fits around the dog's muzzle and behind the ears, much like a horse's halter. The leash is clipped below the chin. It gives you more control over your dog, since you and controlling his head and his body must follow his head.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 4.4 stars**

The head halter is “an extremely effective way to manage a dog's exuberance when walking on a leash,” says Dunbar. It is most effective for leash pulling, rambunctiousness, and antipathy toward other dog's, he says. “Sadly, it is often used as a permanent measure rather than to teach the dog to walk calmly on leash.”

Wright points out that the head halter is useful for giving the trainer control over the dog's movements. “It doesn't create a ‘you pull, I hang on for dear life’ scenario for small owners walking large dogs,” he says.

The head halter not only gives you a mechanical means for controlling your dog, but also provides a gentle message that you are his leader, says Milani. The straps at the back of the neck (right behind the ears) and over the muzzle simulate the way a mother dog gently holds her pups by the neck or the muzzle to communicate her authority. “When the dog is wearing the Gentle Leader [the brand of head halter that Milani recommends], you're constantly communicating to him that he's not in charge.” Milani equates the pressure of the Gentle Leader to a human parent resting her hand gently on the shoulder of a young child.

## **Morrison**

- 1) They look like a muzzle. Now every one thinks you own an aggressive dog
- 2) They are very uncomfortable/hurt the dog
- 3) They come off very easy
- 4) They don't work

What else can I say?

Many years ago when the head harness came in the market, I wrote letters and talked about them on many of the seminars I gave, on how they can create medical problems with the dog. You are putting the dogs head into an unnatural position. This can cause muscle, tendon and vertebra damage. Of course I was criticized for my remarks by the "experts" of the dog world. Well guess what you experts... Toronto based veterinarians have found through intensive research on head harnesses, that yes, they can cause medical problems.

Ok all you people out there. Throw the crap in the garbage, because that's what they are.

## **Intense Exercise**

A solid 30 to 60 minutes of aerobic exercise to burn off your dog's excess energy.

**Cantrell** ★★★★★

**Dunbar** ★★★★★

**Milani**

**Ryan** N/A

**Wright** ★★★★★

**Average score: 2.4 stars**

Exercise may be good for a dog's physical well being, but intense exercise alone doesn't provide the stimulation a dog needs to keep him happy and out of trouble, says Cantrell. "If a dog has excess energy, the best way to 'burn it off' is to focus the dog's attention-engage his mind as well as his body," she says. A run through an agility obstacle course, for instance, will do more for a dog's well being than a three mile jog. "Bicycling, running, or jogging with a dog does not necessarily create a quiet, well mannered dog."

Dunbar agrees. "Whereas aerobic exercise is wonderful for dogs and humans, it will not necessarily cause dogs to become calm." On the contrary, he says, it may build endurance and make the dog active for longer periods. "By all means, please do exercise your dog and yourself, but simply train your dog to settle down and be calm-give him a stuffed Kong and see what happens" (See the "Interactive Toys" section for more information on Kongs.)

Milani warns of the dangers of off leash exercise for dogs. "If the dog won't respond to a 'come' command 100 percent of the time, the owners who turn their problem animals loose are essentially teaching their dogs that it's all right to ignore them," she says. "Consequently, whatever benefit is gained by burning excess energy is offset by the negative effect it has on the human/animal relationship.

**Morrison** ★

Dogs have behaviour problems. Tiring your dog out to solve the problems is not the answer. The answer has to be solved. Intense exercise, NO. Exercise, of course.

### **Interactive Toys**

An interactive toy-like a hollow rubber Kong toy stuffed with treats or cheese, or a plastic Buster cube that releases pieces of food when the dog rolls it- is used to keep a dog busy and prevent boredom.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 4.4 stars**

Interactive toys-particularly Kongs- rate another 10 in Dunbar's book. "The hollow and stuffable rubber Kong is the Cadillac of chew toys," he says. "Nothing beats it." Dunbar, who asserts that stuffing a Kong is a competitive art form in England, says that Kongs solve problems for adult dogs and puppies alike. "Stuffing Kongs with kibble prevents so many potential puppy problems, especially inappropriate chewing, recreational barking, self mutilation, hyperactivity, and owner absent anxiety."

Wright says that the interactive toys are a good option for dogs who need lots of exercise and who love chewing and food. He advises stuffing the toys with healthy treats. A note of caution from Ryan: Leaving multiple dogs alone with these toys might lead to conflict.

**Morrison ★★★★★**

I hate to say it, but I actually agree with DUNBAR on this one.

### **'Nothing in Life Is Free' Program**

This might also be called "no free lunch" or "learn to earn." It's a regimen that incorporates training into everyday life. Under this program, you establish yourself as your dog's leader by asking him to earn everything you give him by doing something you ask first.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 4.6 stars**

"This is a great rule for dogs who seem to need to run the household," says Wright, who maintains that the program is not necessary for dogs who are compliant and submissive most of the time. "It is your choice; how much control do you want in your dog's life?"

Dunbar would give the program a 10. "Integrating training into the puppy's lifestyle is definitely the way to go in terms of establishing happy and willing compliance," he says.

Milani points out that this concept was first proposed as the Learn to Earn program by behaviourist Bill Campbell years ago. In this program, the owner who wants

to put himself back in charge of his human-canine pack asks the dog to do something before giving him any attention. If the dog refuses, the owner simply ignores him. “There is no punishment or negative owner emotion associated with a properly implemented Learn to Earn program,” she says. Owners who cannot ignore their dogs risk being inconsistent with this program and reinforcing negative behaviour. Milani encourages the owner to commit to a consistent application of the program before beginning it. “Our dogs tend to be the reflection of our beliefs. Just as it makes little sense to change the mirror because we don’t like what we see in it, it doesn’t make sense to try and change the dog without changing ourselves first.”

**Morrison ★★★★★**

If nothing in life is free, then why are you giving your dog free cookies, wieners, etc.. just because he sat for you? We are not asking him to crack the atom here. Just a simple sit. Your dog must earn everything he receives.

### **A Pet for Your Pet**

Acquiring a companion animal to keep your dog company.

**Cantrell ★★★★★**

**Dunbar ★★★★★**

**Milani ★★**

**Ryan ★★**

**Wright N/A**

**Average score: 2.5 stars**

Having a companion can be enjoyable for your dog, but adding a dog as an attempt to solve existing behaviour problems might only double your trouble. “Adding a new dog when the current dog is untrained or has behaviour problems often creates more problems,” says Cantrell.

Dunbar echoes that thought. “Whereas this sounds like a wonderful humane solution to many pets’ problems, I would recommend an additional companion dog to relieve loneliness only if the original dog has no existing behaviour problems,” he says. Asserts Milani, “The only reason to get another dog is because you want another dog.”

**Morrison ★**

Having another pet in your house is OK, if that is what YOU, not your dog wants. Having another pet in the house to keep your present pet happy is just stupid. If you are having trouble controlling one dog in your home, then good luck with dog number 2.

### **Prong Collar**

A collar with evenly spaced blunt metal prongs that pinch the dog when tightened.

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar**

**Milani**

**Ryan N/A**

**Wright ★**

**Average score: 0.3 stars**

The least popular method on the survey, prong collars get a thumping thumbs down from our panelists. “I do not use pinch collars. With correct training methods, they are unnecessary,” says Cantrell. “The prongs are not blunt; the prongs are sharp,” says Dunbar, who calls the prong collar “painful metal technology used in lieu of requisite training skills.”

Adds Milani, “Prong collars are a carryover from the 1600’s when, for totally unscientific reasons, animals were defined as mindless machines. With all research into animal thinking and animal minds, there is little logic to support the notion that choking (i.e., cutting off an animals oxygen supply) and causing it pain at the same time enhances learning.”

**Morrison ★★★★★**

I think the experts should re-evaluate this training devise. I will give you a scenario:

We have a 100 pound lady with a big Roty. The dog is completely out of control. The lady has been dragged through the ditch and is now refusing to take the dog for a walk, because she can’t. WAKE UP YOU EXPERTS. Does the dog need a collar like this? NO. The lady needs one to make the dog listen to her.

Hello Mr. DUNBAR, the ends are blunt, not sharp, in fact they are rounded . Wake up and smell the roses. You are telling people what they want to hear, not what they have to hear.

Can the prong collar be abusive? Of course it can. It has to be fitted properly and used properly. Most dogs don’t need this training devise, it’s the person that needs it to make the dog listen.

**Shake Can**

A shake can is typically an aluminum can or plastic bottle with some pennies in it and the top taped closed. You can shake it or toss it towards your dog to startle him when he’s in the midst of doing something that you would like him to stop doing.

**Cantrell ★★**

**Dunbar ★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★**

**Average score: 2.2 stars**

The panelists agree that the shake can should never be thrown at the dog-the sound is used for distraction; the can should never hit the dog. Both Cantrell and Milani say that the proper use of the shake can requires the owner to use it to distract the dog from his misbehaviour (preferably just before he starts the behaviour), then ask the dog to do something else for which it can be rewarded.

Wright calls the shake can “basically an ineffective tool” and warns of unwanted side effects-your kids may learn to throw can and other stuff in your house.

Dunbar is critical of using the shake can on its own, but he says coupling it with a verbal warning gives you a more powerful tool. “Most dogs habituate fairly quickly to artificial attention-getting devices,” he says. “Whereas the shake can may work the first few times when demonstrated by a trainer, the owner finds its effectiveness decreases over time. If the owner verbally warns the dog before rattling the shake can, the dog will

learn to respond to the owner's voice after just three or four trials. Without a verbal warning, the dog develops a Jekyll and Hyde behaviour- it will heed the owner when the owner has the shake can, but ignore him if he does not."

**Morrison ★★★★★**

The shaker can is not to be used for everything your dog does wrong. It has such an incredible reaction, I feel you should use it for only certain things. Dog barking for example. Throw the can of pennies in the direction of the dog (do not hit him) and yell "QUIET". If the barking continues, just shake the can say quiet. For dogs digging holes in your garden, you will be amazed.

**Shock Collar**

This is a collar that provides a correction in the form of an electrical shock when you push a remote button.

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar**

**Milani**

**Ryan N/A**

**Wright ★★**

**Average score: 0.5 star**

Dunbar calls shock collars "a far too convenient means to administer extreme pain." No more a fan of remote shock collars than the anti-barking type, Dunbar says "the very concept of shocking a dog to 'train' it appals me." He coincides that a few very experienced trainers may successfully train a dog using an electronic shock collar, but "it is a very painful way for a dog to learn very basic manners." He is most concerned about the shock collar in the hands of inexperienced trainers. "Sadly, the potential for misuse and abuse in the hands of the uninitiated renders shock collars an utterly barbaric torture device."

Wright sees the electronic collar as a last resort. "When the dog risks euthanasia and there is no time for any other kind of intervention, a trained behaviourist should instruct the owner how to properly use this or any other collar that shocks the dog. If the collar is not effective in reducing the behaviour after a few shocks, the program should be discontinued," he says. Wright points out that the shock collar is least suited for dogs who are shy or fearful or who are already sensitive to other kinds of corrections.

**Morrison ★★**

The shock collar is a very misunderstood training devise. The collar has numerous settings and it starts out with a beep. Depending on the problem with the dog, you can use the appropriate setting.

Mr. Wright is correct: the shock collar is a last resort. I had a customer who raises horses. They had a Roty who liked to jump up and tear pieces of meat from the horses back. He was ready to shoot the dog.

I know, I know, you experts would say to remove the dog from the desire to kill the horses. This is not stopping the dog from the behaviour or curing the dog, all you are doing is putting a band aid on the problem. I used a shock collar on the dog. Was I proud

of the fact that I did this, NO. The dog lived another 8 years on the farm. I saved its life. That's more than the panel of experts could say. In short, it has its place.

### **Shouting 'NO!'**

Shouting at your dog when you see him doing something wrong.

**Cantrell ★**

**Dunbar**

**Milani ★**

**Ryan ★★★**

**Wright ★★**

**Average score: 1.4 stars**

"The word *no* is very overrated and overused," says Cantrell. "*No* may stop a behaviour, but it does not teach a dog the correct behaviour. Dogs learn through 'yes,' not 'no'. In reality, the key is to catch your dog doing something right and reward him for it."

The one-size-fits-all approach of no isn't terribly effective, says Dunbar. "When reprimanding a dog, it is always much more effective to tell the dog what you want him to do. For example, a shout "sit" or "outside."

Milani mentions that she's noticed many dogs respond better to whispered commands than shouted ones. "Given the dog's hearing ability, it always seemed to me that the shouted no must sound like the equivalent of a train roaring by," she says.

**Morrison ★**

I can't believe this, we agree again.

### **Spraying With a Squirt Gun or Spray Bottle**

This involves spritzing your dog in the face with water from a squirt gun or spray bottle to get him to stop what he's doing.

**Cantrell ★★★**

**Dunbar**

**Milani**

**Ryan ★★★★★**

**Wright ★★**

**Average score: 1.8 stars**

Ryan says that spritzing is useful to get a dog's attention off an appropriate thing. "It is not seen as a punisher by most dogs, unless it is combined with something more negative."

As with the shake can, Cantrell advises redirecting the dog's behaviour following the interruption. "A water spritz can stop or interrupt a behaviour," she says. "The key, however, is to redirect the dog's behaviour. After using a spritz, you need to give another signal, such as 'sit' or 'quiet,' and then reward the dog for the correct behaviour."

Milani thinks the spray bottle adds an unnecessary step. "It seems to me that any problem that provides owners the time and opportunity to get close enough to the animal to address the problem in a more meaningful way."

Dunbar is harsher in his criticism of the spray bottle. "This method is cumbersome and erodes the relationship between owner and dog," he says. "It is much easier, quicker, and a darn sight more enjoyable for both parties to simply show the dog

what you would like him to do and then teach him to want to do what you would like him to do via the ‘no free lunch’ program.”

**Morrison ★★**

I’m not a big believer in this training, but for chewing, barking, and digging, use it if it works. I do believe that you can create just as many problems as you can solve.

**Swatting With a Rolled up Newspaper**

Using a rolled up newspaper to swat your dog as a form of discipline.

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar**

**Milani**

**Ryan N/A**

**Wright ★**

**Average score: 0.3 star**

Dunbar wishes he could give this old fashioned method a minus 10 on our scale. “This has nothing to do with dog training. Hitting a dog is plain old abuse,” he says. Certainly the dog will learn: He will learn to dislike training and his trainer, especially when the trainer has a newspaper.”

Milani reiterates that most dog problems boil down to leadership issues. “Leaders initiate, followers react,” she says. “Owners whose training revolves around punishing negative behaviours rather than initiating changes that would prevent the negative behaviour aren’t acting like leaders. Because of this, their shock or prong collars , squirt guns, and rolled up papers might stop one particular behaviour, but they do nothing to prevent all those other leadership related problems.”

**Morrison**

I don’t really care what problem we have with the dog. If we have to resort to hitting the dog, we are the ones with the problem, not the dog.

**Training/Slip Collar**

Also known as a “choke chain,” a metal or nylon slip collar is used in conjunction with a leash to give jerk and release collar corrections.

**Cantrell**

**Dunbar ★★**

**Milani ★★★★★**

**Ryan N/A**

**Wright ★★★★★**

**Average score: 2 stars**

Milani’s three star rating is for slip collars used properly. But she points out that these collars can be easily misused. “My main problem with collar corrections is that you can apply a tremendous amount of pressure to the dog’s cervical spine in the course of ‘correcting’ the animal,” she says. “The lightest pressure and release should do the job. If it doesn’t, the owner should reevaluate the training method.”

Dunbar is no fan of collar corrections. “Leash collar corrections are notably ineffective, especially in the hands of a novice trainer. If collar corrections were effective, their need would reduce over time. However, the frequency usually increases over time.”

Cantrell dislikes not only metal slip covers-which can cause trachea damage when the dog pulls on his leash and strains against it- but also training based on collar correction. She recommends “positive, dog friendly, reward based training.”

**Morrison ★★★**

Hey you panel of experts, do you know how guide dogs for the blind are trained? You got it, the slip chain. The problem we have here is not the training devise it's the trainer. Teaching people to use this aid is the hard part. I know, I know, feed your dogs treats and more treats and you don't need to use this devise. I won't even comment on this. I think all of you know how I feel about this method of training.