Riley's Angels Training FAQs

How do I choose the right dog for me and for my family?

If you are asking this question, kudos! Few people go beyond the cuteness factor when choosing a dog's breed, gender, or age. While training is extremely important, instinct and breed also play a big part, so choosing the dog that is best suited for your family, your lifestyle, and what you hope to do with your dog will set you up for success. Our trainers are happy to talk with you prior to adopting a new dog to help you make the best choice.

At what age should I enroll my dog in training?

Training should begin as soon as possible. Ideally, training is lined up for your puppy before you bring them home from the breeder or shelter. Puppies must have at least their first round of vaccinations (even better, their second round) to begin training.

Do you train dogs that will not ultimately work as therapy dogs?

Yes. Riley's Angels trains dogs of all community involvement levels (even if that means just being your best friend and sofa buddy).

Do you do behavior modification for severe cases such as dog or human aggression?

Typically, no. Riley's Angels will help refer you to a behaviorist if your dog needs serious behavior modification. We believe that the best results are always obtained by working with a specialist and are happy to talk with you about what we feel will be the best training choice(s) for your dog and situation.

Is there an age limit on training?

No. Dogs of all ages and training levels can train with us. We specialize in puppy and therapy dog training, but we also offer basic obedience and specialty classes that are well suited for all dogs (including recently adopted shelter dogs).

Is there a minimum age for dogs to become certified in therapy work?

Yes. Dogs must be at least one year of age when they begin the evaluation process.

Is there a maximum age for dogs to become certified in therapy work?

No. As long as your dog is healthy, passes their evaluation, and enjoys working, they can become certified.

RILEY'S ANGELS

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Riley's Angels is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that trains Therapy Dog teams to work with counselors and teachers in our local schools and to visit in hospitals and other healthcare settings. Donations made to Riley's Angels are tax deductible and support our community outreach programs and education.

www.rileysangels.org

continued

I have a 4 year old dog who has had no training, but has the perfect temperament for therapy work. Can I join Riley's Angels Therapy Dog Class?

Not immediately. Ideally, any adult dog beginning training with us for the first time will take a basic manners class followed by the Canine Good Citizen (CGC) course. All dogs must AT LEAST take the CGC course and pass the evaluation at the end of the class before being considered for the therapy dog prep course. Once the TD prep course is completed, as well as a final evaluation and interview, an invitation may then be extended to enroll in the therapy dog course.

My dog has obtained their CGC with another trainer. Can we join Riley's Angels Therapy Dog Class?

Not as an initial point of entry. If our trainers have never worked with you or your dog, you must schedule a free consultation and evaluation with them before proceeding with classes. From there, we will determine how much additional training you and your pup might need before joining the therapy dog class.

Why is so much formal training required before joining the Therapy Dog class?

We take therapy work very seriously, which is why entry into the Therapy Dog class is by invitation only. Our teams are active in the community with all ages, from babies to the elderly, so we need to feel certain that both the dogs and humans are ready for the responsibility. The curriculum of Therapy Dog class is designed as much for the handlers as for the dogs, ensuring that they are equipped with both the formal regulations of therapy work as well as relationship skills to work their dog in the community.

Where do Riley's Angels Therapy Dog teams work?

Our teams (yes, the handler and dog are certified as a team) volunteer in many capacities, depending on the passion of the handler and settings in which the dog enjoys working. We participate in reading programs for children, de-stress days for high school and college students during exam times, and visitations at places like the Ohio Veterans Home, local nursing homes, and local hospitals. Some of our teams include counselors and teachers that use their TDs to better reach students. Some of our teams with special training also respond to crises in our area.

What makes Riley's Angels training different from that of other trainers?

Riley's Angels is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, which means we never make decisions for our dog/handler teams based on profit. You can be assured that we are committed to you reaching the goals you have for you and your dog and we have a Board of Directors that oversees everything we do to make sure we stay true to our mission. Our goal is to enhance the human-canine bond while strengthening the relationship between people and their dogs by providing an educational approach to training. We equip our clients with the knowledge and skills to live a happy, healthy life with their dog. Finally, we hope to inspire others to become more active in their community to enrich lives mentally, physically, and/or spiritually.