

The Mutt Master Makeover is a simple to follow three phase program designed to help Pet Parents get back on track when dealing with a dog who has developed problem behaviors. This plan is designed to reset all the mistakes that have been made, unknowingly of course, that have led to your dog's undesirable behaviors. It is like a magic reset button that erases the past and then quickly provides your dog with an environment that more closely resembles their natural state.

The program is based on three foundational elements:

- the environment you create
- the relationship you establish
- the way in which you communicate with your pet

Creating the right environment:

Dogs thrive in environments where there are clear rules, structure, boundaries, consistency, and calm energy. This requires that you understand your dog's needs; those needs are based on their breed, age, health, and temperament. Your dog's needs will then determine the appropriate amount of physical and mental stimulation you must provide. The more dominant or pushy your dog is the more consistent you must be in how you relate to him.

Tip:

This is going to take commitment and consistency on your part. You are going to have to resolve that you are designing your home environment for the greatest levels of workability for you and your pet. When a dog comes into our human environment they are going to instinctually try to figure out the pecking order and determine who is in charge. This is where it is the Pet Parent's responsibility to clearly define the relationship.

Your Relationship:

Dogs need to understand the "pecking order" within their pack and they desire the structure of a traditional pack and the rules and boundaries that come with it. If a more dominant dog comes into your home they will be pushy and demanding of your attention and affection. They will try to instigate play and may even jump on you to test the boundaries. They will try to invade your personal space and assert themselves onto beds, couches, and your even your lap. If you comply with their demands and allow them to get their way in invading your personal space, the message you are sending them is that they are in charge. They just want to know who is "driving the bus" and who are "the passengers".

Tip:

Some people are not comfortable with playing the dominant role in their pet relationship. Remember, this is NOT about what works for you, rather it is what will create workability

for you and your pet. Dogs are instinctual creatures. Everyone benefits when you relate to them as the pack leader.

We offer this tough love tip:

The way you have related to your dog hasn't worked – you may want to try something new!

Communication:

We humans communicate differently than dogs. Dogs respond *instinctually* and we respond *emotionally*. Learning to communicate in a way that works for your dog will help you get the balance you want in your home.

Body language is how dogs gain information about your rank and your intention, however, most pet parents send mixed signals with their use of eye contact, verbal cues, and their body language.

Eye contact is a dog's main source of communication. If you are trying to discourage a behavior and yet looking at your dog at the same time, they will be confused because they see eye contact at that moment, as a reward or an invitation.

When you push your dog off you with the same hands that play with them or show them affection, they will feel that you are playing which is why they will usually return with more enthusiasm.

Think of it like this, would it be acceptable for a student to get up from his desk and go sit at the teachers desk during a lecture? Would it be appropriate for an intern to barge into the boss's office without knocking, sit at his desk, kick his feet up on his desk and then start eating the candy from the candy dish on the desk? No!
The same boundaries need to be honored between humans and dogs.

If you follow this plan the way it was written, then you will quickly see how you can create success for you and your dog. Throughout the program we will focus on three foundational elements of The Mutt Master Makeover:

- 1- Learn how to create an environment for your dog with rules, structure, boundaries, consistency, and calm energy.
- 2- Learn how to communicate effectively with your dog.
- 3- Learn how to recognize what you are doing (or not doing unknowingly) that contribute to your dog's behavior issues.

If you change what you are doing and how you are doing it, you will change how your dog responds to you and to others. You will create a loving home that works for you and your dog.