



SELECTING THE RIGHT TRAINER



As in any service industry, there are a lot of good trainers and a lot of really bad trainers. A bad trainer is not only ineffective and therefore a waste of money, but a trainer that uses antiquated or inappropriate training methods can actually cause certain behaviors to worsen (especially in fearful dogs or dogs that have suffered abuse.) The Dogs X-Allies program has devoted a lot of time and resources to identifying effective, positive trainers throughout the geographic areas served by DXL. Please contact dogsxallies@dogsxrescue.org for trainer recommendations in the area near you. However, if you are considering a trainer that has not been endorsed as a Dogs X-Allie, DXL has developed the following list of questions to help guide adopters in finding a dog trainer that has the appropriate qualifications to help your dog be the best he can be!

1. Professional qualifications/certifications?

- Recommended (one or more of the following):
 - APDT - Association of Pet Dog Trainers
 - CCPDT - Council for Professional Dog Trainers
 - IACP - International Association of Canine Professionals
 - NKDTA - National K-9 Dog Trainers Association
 - ACAAB - Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist
 - Veterinary Technician
 - Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM)
- Other _____
- None

2. Training Methods

- Recommended:
 - Positive Reinforcement/Motivational Training
 - Clicker
 - Relationship-Based
- Generally NOT Recommended for Family Pets:
 - Dominance-Based
 - Schutzhund
 - Koehler Method
 - Electric "Shock" Collar

3. Program Offerings:

- Recommended:
 - Canine Good Citizen
 - Tracking
 - Recreational Agility or other Sports (Frisbee, Flyball, Rally, Find&Seek, etc.)
- Generally NOT Recommended for Family Pets
 - Herding
 - Detection (explosive, narcotic)
 - Assistance (seeing-eye, seizure, medical)
 - Police
 - Search and Rescue
 - Guard Dog

4. Does trainer have experience working with dogs to correct/manage the following behaviors:

- Dominance (mounting/humping, marking, etc.)
- Fears, Phobias, Anxiety (Loud noises, new people/places)
- Separation Issues
- Introductions/ Socialization with Other Animals
- Aggression or Reactivity towards Other Dogs
- Aggression or Reactivity towards Humans
- Resource Guarding



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5. Does trainer allow/encourage children to participate in training? YES NO
6. Does trainer offer any discount for rescue dogs? YES NO

Y/N	Course Offerings	Ideal For	Frequency & Duration	Next Start Date	Cost
	Group Puppy Training	Puppies <6 months; Socialization with other dogs; Basic commands and leash training			
	Group Basic Obedience	Medium to well socialized dogs >6 months; Introductions to new dogs and people; Basic commands and leash training			
	Group Advanced Obedience	Well socialized dogs >6 months that are often in public places; Advanced commands & reinforcement of basic commands			
	Agility/Rally/Frisbee/Flyball/ect.	High energy/highly intelligent/athletic dogs >6 months for which a daily walk or run does not provide adequate exercise; Dogs that are diggers, chewers, anxious, destructive			
	In-home or Private Sessions	Families with kids; Dogs with more significant behavioral issues that need additional socialization before participating in a class environment			
	Pack Walks	Dogs that have been working with a trainer in group or private lessons to overcome aggression/anxiety around other dogs; Well socialized dogs to maintain their social skills			

Additional Information/Suggestions:

- Ask trainer to supply references from existing clients
- General Obedience and Puppy training classes offered by retail pet supply stores (such as Petco or Petsmart) are a fine place to start if your dog needs basic training and socialization, however, they are NOT qualified to address actual behavioral problems (such as those listed in section 4.) Trainers at retail pet supply stores typically attend a one day seminar on “how to be a dog trainer” whereas trainers that have achieved certifications such as those listed in section 1 have completed extensive courses of study on animal behavior, followed by extensive apprenticeships and testing which require between 3 and 6 years to complete. Certified trainers may be a little more costly than “big box” training classes, but if you are experiencing significant difficulties with your dog it is worth the investment
- A typical in home private lesson with a certified trainer costs approximately \$75-150 per 1 hours
- Many trainers offer one hour group classes that meet once a week for 6-8 weeks at a cost ranging from \$100-300
- Additional information available online at:
 - www.dogsxlrescue.org/information-for-dog-owners/training
 - <http://www.apdt.com/>
 - <http://www.ccpdt.org/>