



## How to choose a dog trainer?

Dog training is an unregulated industry, meaning you do not have to have a qualification to call yourself a dog trainer. This can make choosing a dog trainer difficult, as there are a lot of trainers using outdated, non-science based training methods that could potentially harm your relationship with your dog and cause long lasting behavioral problems.

Here at Cherry Hill Animal Hospital, we support humane FORCE-FREE training methods which are based on how dogs learn and backed by scientific studies. We do not recommend training methods or equipment that cause fear, anxiety, stress, pain, or injury.

### What to look for:

- Force-free, reward-based training methods that show your dog what to do using rewards like treats, toys and affection.
- A good teacher who views both you and your dog as the learner and can explain and demonstrate the behaviors they are teaching.
- A patient and supportive trainer who can adapt humane training methods to suit the individual needs of your dog and your lifestyle.
- A trainer that will refer you to a veterinarian if they recognize some behaviors which may be flags for an underlying medical issue.

### What to avoid:

- Any training methods or equipment that cause fear, anxiety, stress or pain to punish undesired behaviors.
- Harsh verbal and physical corrections.
- Training collars such as bark or shock collars, prong, choke or spray collars.
- Someone who cannot explain the reason behind teaching a particular behavior.
- Balanced trainers – someone who uses both reward and aversive training methods
- Trainers who offer a “quick fix” of an unwanted behavior. True behavior modification takes time and patience. Often “quick fixes” involve the use of punishment-based training methods and although the specific undesirable behavior has been suppressed it may in turn cause other issues such as damage the bond between you and your dog or create other behavioral problems which can be much worse.
- Trainers who diagnose medical issues.

We recommend visiting the following website to find a Force Free trainer near you:

<https://fearfreepets.com/resources/directory/>

<https://www.petprofessionalguild.com/Zip-Code-Search>

<https://karenpryoracademy.com/find-a-trainer/#!/directory/map>