

Important Information Your Dog Trainer Needs to Know

It may be difficult for you to determine what is important information for your dog trainer to know. Generally, the more information your trainer has about your dog, the better. It is important for your dog trainer to receive an accurate history about your dog in order for them to determine what kind of training would be most suitable for you and your dog. The information you provide them will also help them to determine the best location for the training to occur, if your dog can go to them for training, or if in-home training would be more effective, or they may even recommend virtual training sessions.

Here are some things that your dog trainer should know:

If your dog has had any recent medical issues.

- When working on behaviour change, it's important to first rule out any possible medical causes for the unwanted behaviour
- The trainer may also want to know if your dog is currently taking any medications that may contribute to their behaviour

Your dog's general temperament/demeanor.

- If your dog is generally more anxious or environmentally nervous, versus if your dog is generally more confident and outgoing
- This will change the approach that your trainer takes to how to work with your dog and possibly the environment they choose to work with them as well

How your dog interacts with unfamiliar people.

- If your dog is generally friendly and happy to greet new people
- If your dog is nervous of new people
- If your dog is potentially aggressive towards new people (in or outside of your home)
- This will help your trainer determine how and where to work with you and your dog
- If your dog does show any aggression towards unfamiliar people, they may request to complete a virtual consultation prior to meeting you and your dog in person

If your dog has ever bitten a person, dog, or other animal.

- It's really important to be upfront and honest about any previous bites so your trainer understands your dog and is able to work with them safely
- Some trainers will not feel comfortable working with a dog who has a bite history, so it's really for you and your dog's best interest to find a trainer who is confident and comfortable working with a dog with a bite history

If you have done any training with your dog in the past.

- Your trainer will likely want to know what kind of training you have done with your dog already, even if it's training that you've done at home
- It's always good to let your trainer know what cues your dog already knows so that they can use known cues when working with your dog



Your dog's favourite things.

- Does your dog love treats of all kind or are they more picky?
- Does your dog have a favourite toy or do they not show much interest in toys?
- This will help your trainer determine how best to work with your dog

The main behaviour concern you are looking to address if you are enrolled in a behaviour modification program.

- Give your trainer a list of what behaviour concerns you want to address with your pup
- Think about what is top priority for you and your dog and make that clear to your trainer so they know where to start
- Also, try to provide information about how long the concerning behaviours have been occurring

Your training goals.

- List your training goals in order of priority
- Your trainer will help you adjust or re-evaluate your goals to make sure they are realistic and achievable

Depending on the specific behaviours you want to work on or teach your dog, your trainer will have a lot more questions for you. Make sure you are open and honest with them so they are able to work most effectively with you and your dog. Also, be sure to ask them any questions you have during your training sessions or before you even choose to use their services. It's important that you have a good relationship with your trainer so that they are best able to teach you how to work with your dog.

See our [How to Choose a Trainer](#) info sheet for more information on what to look for when searching for a trainer.

Interested in the training services offered by Toronto Humane Society?

Visit our website for more information about the group classes and private packages we are currently offering: <https://www.torontohumanesociety.com/pet-services/training-and-behaviour/>

Or email publictraining@torontohumanesociety.com

