

Code of conduct of the initiative for force-free dog training

We expect a kind approach to the dog, based on modern learning theory and 'canine science'.

We do not have to perform as an 'alpha' or as a 'pack leader'. Instead, we have to know how dogs learn and how they express themselves through their body language. Using this knowledge, and with empathy and experience, a good trainer will guide each dog and owner team according to their individual needs. A trainer is aware that a dog does not learn well when he is intimidated, pressured or made to feel fearful. Furthermore, this treatment can inadvertently lead to negative associations. The trainer will therefore always work in a non-aversive manner i.e. neither intimidating the dog psychologically nor causing him physical pain or discomfort.

The following are explicitly not allowed:

- lead jerks/lead impulses
- prodding either with a finger or with a foot/hissing
- forcing the dog on to his back/turning him over
- hitting and kicking
- imitating bites with the hands
- psychological intimidation (e.g. threatening the dog by bending over him, staring him in the eyes, shouting or growling at him)
- the use of check-chain collars/choke collars
- prong collars
- shock collars
- working with fright tools, such as rattle-cans and throwing-chains, or by spraying water
- Spray collars (whether they use air, water, chemicals, or an acoustic stimulus)
- groin straps
- everything which frightens the dog or causes pain or discomfort.

Helpful tools

- food
- toys
- friendly body contact (e.g. stroking the dog)
- voice (motivating, praising)
- clicker, target
- food dummy
- harness
- lead, long-line



Competent dog trainers...

- have a professional qualification and educate themselves through continual professional development programmes
- are acquainted with canine health issues which can cause unwanted behaviour
- work with vets to exclude possible underlying health issues
- work with dogs and their owners using praise and rewards
- build the training on the foundation of shared successes
- treat people and dogs respectfully

Please Visit

www.forcefree-dogtraining.org

for informations about nonaversive, rewardbased dog training, recommendations of literature and dog trainer lists by country.