



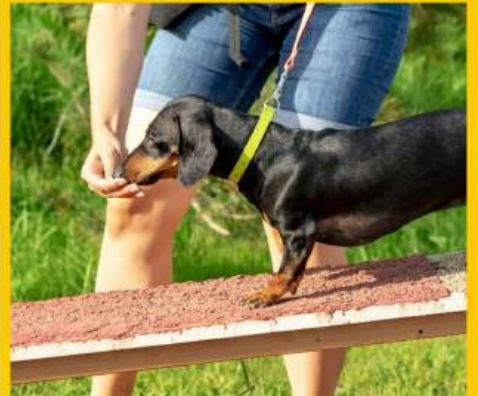
S U S A N S W A N S O N

# MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS



**UNLOCKING BEHAVIOR SOLUTIONS!**

FROM MISUNDERSTOOD ACTIVE DOGS TO HARMONIOUS BONDS:  
DIVE INTO PROFESSIONAL TRAINING,  
MASTER THE BASICS, AND UNLOCK AGILITY SECRETS



# MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS

*Susan Swanson*

## MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS

## YOUR EXTRA CONTENT IS WAITING FOR YOU!

Here's what you'll find inside the bonus:

- A FULL COLOUR PDF version of the book
- The AUDIO BOOK of the book
- Early access to a sneak peek at our other dog-related publications
- A summary sheet of all the training exercises with step-by-step instructions
- A Q&A session with our authors
- An introductory chapter on dog nutrition written by an expert veterinary nutritionist, which you can preview
- A table of all the foods that are toxic to dogs
- A balanced and nutritious recipe, written by a veterinary nutritionist, to try now



## MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS

**Copyright © 2023 by Susan Swanson**

All rights reserved.

No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher or author, except as permitted by U.S. copyright law.

Susan Swanson © 123RF.com

# Table of Content

---

<b>Dedication</b> .....	10
<b>Warnings</b> .....	11
<b>Introduction</b> .....	12

## PART 1. INTRODUCTION TO DOG TRAINING

<b>Chapter 1</b>	
<b>The Impact of Training Energetic Dogs</b> .....	15
The Importance and Necessity of Training Your Dog .....	15
When to Start Training Your Four-Legged Friend.....	16
The Benefits of Training for You and Your Dog.....	16
The Significance of Physical Activity and Mental Engagement .....	17
How Much Training to Do?.....	17
The Importance of Rest After Exercise .....	18
How to Approach Dog Training?.....	18
The Importance of Communicating Effectively with Your Dog .....	19
The Importance of Building a Relationship with Your Dog.....	19
Optimal Time and Effort Spent on Training .....	20
Consistency and Patience in Training .....	20
Dog Training as Stress Relief Therapy .....	20
Connecting with Nature Through Dog Training.....	21
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
<b>Dog Non-Verbal Communication</b> .....	22
Understanding How Dogs Communicate .....	23
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
<b>The Temperament and Characteristics of Dogs</b> .....	25
Dog Temperaments .....	25
Dog Characteristics.....	26

<b>Chapter 4</b>	
<b>Preventing and Managing Unwanted Behavior</b> .....	28
Lesson 1: Stop Excessive Barking.....	29
Lesson 2: How to Stop Your Dog from Jumping on People? .....	31
Lesson 3: Transitioning from Leash Pulling to Walking with a Loose Leash.....	32
Lesson 4: Preventing Play Biting or Nipping Hands from Becoming a Problem.....	34
Lesson 5: Preventing Damage from Dog Chewing .....	35
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
<b>What to Do If Your Dog Does Not Eat His Meals</b> .....	37
General Guidelines for Meals .....	38
<b>Chapter 6</b>	
<b>Addressing or Alleviating Separation Anxiety</b> .....	41
Identifying Signs and Symptoms of Separation Anxiety in Dogs .....	41
Prepare the Room Before Leaving the Home.....	42
Separation Anxiety Desensitization Training .....	43
Tips for Entering and Exiting Your Home.....	44
Your Step by Step Instructions .....	45

**PART 2.  
LET'S MOVE ON TO PRACTICE**

<b>Chapter 7</b>	
<b>Important Things to Remember When Training Your Dog</b> .....	51
Getting Ready for Training.....	51
An Appropriate and Safe Environment.....	51
What Makes a Good Training Environment? .....	52
Start in Areas with Few Distractions .....	52
Barriers and Fences.....	52
<b>Chapter 8</b>	
<b>Equipment for Training</b> .....	54
Equipment 1: Collar.....	54
Equipment 2: Harness .....	55
Equipment 3: Leash .....	55
Equipment 4: Clicker .....	56
Equipment 5: Small Treats and a Treat Bag.....	56

**Chapter 9**  
**Training Rewards**..... 57  
 Choose Your Type of Reward Based on Your Dog’s Temperament..... 58  
 Training Conclusion ..... 58  
 Training Your Dog to Pay Attention to You..... 59

**PART 3.**  
**BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DOG TRAINING**

**Chapter 10**  
**Fundamentals of Dog Training**..... 63  
 Principle 1: Positive Reinforcement vs. Punishment ..... 64  
 Principle 2: Verbal Cues and Hand Gestures ..... 66  
     *Verbal Cues*..... 66  
     *Hand Gestures* ..... 66  
 Principle 3: Identify Your Dog’s Favorite Reward..... 68  
     *Reward 1: Treats*..... 68  
     *Reward 2: Toys* ..... 68  
     *Reward 3: Physical Affection*..... 69  
     *Reward 4: Verbal Praise* ..... 69  
 Principle 4: How Dogs Learn to Associate Commands with Actions ..... 71

**Chapter 11**  
**Timing Is Everything** ..... 72  
 Marking, Rewarding, and Correcting ..... 72  
 Using a Clicker to Mark Behaviors..... 73  
 What to Do When Unwanted Behavior Occurs ..... 74  
 Always Avoid Rewarding Bad Behavior ..... 75

**Chapter 12**  
**Basic Commands** ..... 76  
 A Comprehensive Guide to Mastering the Essential Commands ..... 76  
 Rule 1: Don’t Repeat Commands Several Times..... 77  
 Rule 2: Don’t Get Confused with Commands ..... 77  
 Rule 3: Never Give Random Rewards ..... 77  
 Rule 4: Never Give a Command at the Wrong Time..... 77  
 Command 1: “Sit” ..... 78  
 Command 2: “Down” ..... 80



Command 3: “Come” ..... 82  
 Command 4: “Stay” ..... 83  
 Command 5: “Leave” ..... 84  
 Command 6: “No” ..... 85

**Chapter 13**  
**Command Reinforcement** ..... 86

**PART 4.**  
**ADVANCED DOG TRAINING**

**Chapter 14**  
**Advanced Training for Active Dogs** ..... 91  
 What Is Advanced Training? ..... 91

**Chapter 15**  
**Advanced Obedience** ..... 93

**Chapter 16**  
**Remote Controls** ..... 94

**Chapter 17**  
**Types of Advanced Training** ..... 96  
 Recovery Command ..... 96  
 Training 1: The “Hold” Command ..... 97  
 Training 2: The “Fetch” Command ..... 98

**Chapter 18**  
**Agility** ..... 100  
 Training 3: Walking on Heel ..... 101  
 Training 4: Bridges or Dog Walks ..... 103  
 Training 5: Open Tunnels ..... 105  
 Training 6: Bar Jumps ..... 107

**Chapter 19**  
**Scent or Detection Work** ..... 109  
 Training 7: Detection Work ..... 110

**Chapter 20**  
**Fun Tricks and Commands** ..... 112  
 Trick 1: Shake Hands ..... 113

## MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS

Trick 2: Hide and Seek.....	115
Trick 3: Spin.....	116
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>117</b>
<b>Resources</b> .....	<b>119</b>
Books and Publications on Dog Training .....	119
Dedicated Websites and Forums.....	119
Courses and Workshops on the Subject.....	119
Valuable Online Resources.....	120
Social Media.....	120
Mobile Applications.....	120
Conferences and Conventions .....	120
<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>121</b>

## Dedication

---



This book is dedicated to all my dogs.

If even a small part of the world you have taught me is useful to our readers, then I will have done a good job.

Thank you guys.

## Warnings

---

The purpose of this book is to introduce you to the subject of dog training and to give you your first tools for training your dog. Training is a very broad subject, which certainly cannot be exhausted in one book, but requires a lifetime spent with our four-legged friends.

Therefore, this book is intended to be a first tool for dealing with training and inevitably cannot fully illustrate the topic, reserving the right to explore the subject further with another book.

This book may give you the basics, but undoubtedly, training is something you do, not something you read about in a book. So, don't hesitate to go to a good dog trainer, they will know how to guide you and set up the exercises in the right way, better than you will ever learn from reading this or the best training books in the world.

Enjoy reading and have a good journey!

## Introduction

---

Everyone likes to see a civilized dog who knows how to be social. But believe me, there's nothing better for me than to see a dog enjoying training: dogs really love training with their owners, it's a way of being together and doing something fun.

Dogs are an integral part of many households around the world, bringing joy and unconditional love to many people's hearts. But no matter how much they brighten our days, some people struggle with extremely energetic dogs. And if you're reading this book, chances are that your four-legged friend is very active, and normal doggy exercise doesn't seem to do the trick!

With these dogs, it doesn't matter how many times you go outside to play fetch, they don't seem to get tired! Or, the more you play with them, the more they want to play, and you can't devote your whole day to stimulating your dog. So, the question is, what can you do to get rid of your dog's pent-up energy? And what mental exercises can you use when normal dog exercises aren't enough?

There are tireless dogs, at least in body, that one must try to tire out in mind. This book is dedicated to dog parents with high-energy dogs. It explains why training is useful for these dogs and answers frequently asked questions about dog training in general. Once you've understood that, I'll give you tips and tricks on dog training, including preparation techniques, basic dog training principles, and how to teach basic commands.

With these tips and basic cues, you'll lay the foundation for more advanced training techniques and games to help relieve excess energy in your dog's body. Not only will you learn how to deal with this type of dog, but you will also learn how to distinguish between lively and undesirable behavior.

Finally, as you read this book, remember that every dog is different. I'll give you guidelines to follow, but you may need to customize and adapt the content to best suit your dog's needs.

**PART 1.**  
**INTRODUCTION TO DOG**  
**TRAINING**

## MENTAL EXERCISES FOR DOGS

## CHAPTER 1

# The Impact of Training Energetic Dogs

Many people are unaware that dogs exert more mental energy than physical energy. What does this mean? Well when a dog has to solve a problem explore their surroundings or participate in training exercises they tend to become more tired compared to going for a walk.

Training your dog is a way to stimulate their minds while also ensuring they behave according to your expectations. In this chapter, we will briefly discuss some concepts of dog training that will serve as a foundation, for the rest of this book.

While reading consider how you can incorporate these tips into your life and the life of your furry companion.

## The Importance and Necessity of Training Your Dog

Dog training is more than just teaching your furry friend a few party tricks to make a good impression with friends. It plays an important role in both your life and theirs. That's because dogs thrive on rules and structure, but they're not instinctively used to the rules of the human world. Instead, owners are responsible for using training techniques to teach their dogs which rules to follow. These rules and structures include:

- Mealtimes
- Acceptable behavior
- How to keep themselves occupied
- How to interact in different environments

As well as helping your canine companion adapt to the human world, training also benefits their mind and body. It gives dogs the confidence they need to navigate the world while providing mental and physical stimulation. Without training, they can become bored and frustrated and start to act out. That's when unwanted behaviors start to set in. But if you start training as soon as possible, you can shape your companion to fit your lifestyle and routines, while preventing bad and unwanted behaviors.



## When to Start Training Your Four-Legged Friend

In general, it's never too early to start training your dog, but there are some caveats to this rule. Training covers every aspect of your dog's life, from eating, potty training, interacting with people and other animals, solving problems, and following rules.

The most basic is how to behave in the new home they find themselves in. For example, a puppy needs to immediately learn boundaries, follow a routine, be potty trained, and know what is and is not an acceptable behavior.

They don't need to learn advanced tricks at such a young age, as they need a training base first. So, here are a few tips to help you remember when to start training your dog and what behaviors to start with:

- As soon as you adopt your puppy or dog, you'll need to teach it basic house rules (where it can and can't go) and potty training.
- Once he has settled into his new home, start with basic training such as teaching him his name, how to walk on a lead, and socializing.
- Once your dog knows the basics, you can start with basic obedience training such as "Sit," "Down," "Stay," "Come," "Leave," etc.
- When he can do the basic cues, you can move on to more advanced training (to learn more, read the following chapters).

It's never too early to start training your dog. The trick is that every dog progresses at its own pace. Some will learn faster than others, and some will regress in training. So, your dog needs to understand the basics before you move on to something more advanced. And if he doesn't seem to be doing a command as well as he used to, it's best to retrain him before you move on.

## The Benefits of Training for You and Your Dog

Dog training is great for dogs because it keeps their minds active. Anything you teach him will involve his mind and body, so he won't get bored or develop bad behaviors. At the same time, it gives your dog confidence and improved social skills, making it easier to go for walks or meet new people. Finally, it keeps your furry friend safe. For example, suppose he knows basic commands and responds to your verbal cues. In this case, you can prevent him from running across a busy road or approaching dangerous situations.

In terms of benefits for owners, dog training allows you to teach your dog acceptable behavior, tricks, and how to behave in different environments. This means he will learn to adapt to the type of environment you regularly encounter and fit in effortlessly. While you are training your furry friend to be the best companion for you and your family, you are also building a solid dog-owner relationship.

## The Significance of Physical Activity and Mental Engagement

Up until now I've highlighted the benefits of training as a means of stimulating dogs. But what exactly makes it so important? When dogs learn things it triggers neural pathways in their brains. These pathways allow signals to travel from one part of the brain to another and throughout the body. The training a dog receives the stronger these neural pathways become.

Conversely, if dogs do not receive training they do not utilize these pathways as frequently causing them to weaken. As a result, dogs may find it challenging to learn tricks or experience mental setbacks particularly as they grow older. This is why mental stimulation is just as crucial for a dogs well-being as physical exercise.

Speaking of stimulation dogs require movement, for various health reasons that encompass:

- Maintaining blood pressure and heart health
- Preserving muscle and bone strength
- Enhancing flexibility and mobility
- Ensuring regular bowel movements
- Preventing boredom
- Boosting metabolism while reducing obesity
- Alleviating stress and anxiety

## How Much Training to Do?

It's important to find the balance when it comes to training your dog. Like humans, dogs can experience negative consequences if they are overexerted. Overdoing it can result in injuries or worsen conditions like hip dysplasia. To keep things safe

and healthy a general guideline is to provide puppies with five minutes of exercise, per day for each month of their age.

This implies that a puppy that is two months old should only engage in activity for ten minutes per day while a three-month old puppy should have fifteen minutes of exercise. As, for adult dogs they typically require from thirty to sixty minutes of exercise daily depending on their level of activity.

## The Importance of Rest After Exercise

While training is critical, rest plays an important role for dogs. On a physical level, it helps their bodies recover after training. Any stress they may have been under is given a chance to heal and recover when they sleep. That's because their bodies only go into recovery mode when they sleep. That's when they produce certain healing proteins that heal the damage done to various cells in their body.

When it comes to their minds, dogs need to shut down after training. They've had a lot of mental activity during the session and need to learn to shut down afterward. If they don't get rest immediately afterward, they will become over-exhausted toddlers, difficult to handle, and a bit unruly. You can prevent this by using a dog kennel or leaving your furry friend to sleep in a closed room or in a quiet corner after training. This way he can't go out and explore and is forced to rest and breathe.

## How to Approach Dog Training?

As the owner, you're responsible for training your dog. But if you don't know how to go about it, you'll do it all wrong and not get the best results. The best approach is one that includes the following:

- Be patient with your dog. He's learning something new and it may take him a while to understand what you mean.
- Know how to teach a command step by step before you try it on your dog. The more prepared you are, the better your dog will learn.
- Use markers and rewards as part of the training to create positive associations in your dog's mind (more information in the dedicated chapter).
- Understand that your dog isn't like other dogs and will learn at his own pace. If it takes longer, be patient and consistent in your training efforts.

- Always make sure your dog understands the basic, simpler training techniques before trying something new. If you don't, your dog may become confused or not be ready for more advanced steps.

Remember, while it is good to teach your dog different things, it should be fun for both of you. The more fun your furry friend has during the session, the more eager he will be to do it again tomorrow.

## The Importance of Communicating Effectively with Your Dog

People don't realize that dogs don't understand our language. They can't understand what we tell them, they learn by association. For example, they don't know that "Sit" means to put your butt on the floor. The only reason they know how to do it is because you have taught them. If you've used a different word, like "Jump," but taught them to sit when you say it, they'll sit. Our point is that dogs don't understand our language.

This misunderstanding individuals often become frustrated, with their dogs when they fail to behave according to their desires. However, you'll get better results if you learn to communicate effectively with your dog. This includes consistency in training, the use of coherent cues and rewards, and teaching associations (which you will learn more about in subsequent chapters).

## The Importance of Building a Relationship with Your Dog

Building a bond with your dog is crucial. Trust forms the foundation of any relationship. When your dog trusts you they believe that you have their best interests in mind. This trust leads to confidence in following your guidance and enthusiasm for learning from you. On the hand if your relationship, with your dog is lacking they may become distrustful. This can result in an aggressive or stubborn demeanor that makes training seem impossible (which is the worst case scenario).

## Optimal Time and Effort Spent on Training

Dogs learn best with short repetitions. Long training sessions are tiring and they don't learn as effectively as with shorter training sessions. This allows your dog to perfect one part (or command) rather than learning several at once. Not only will they struggle to retain so much knowledge in such a short time, but they also risk becoming bored with training in general.

It's best to train your dog twice a day for 10-15 minutes, rather than having a long training session. You could do one session in the morning and one in the evening. And when you do these sessions, mix up the commands you're teaching. For example, if you're training "Sit" and "Stay" in the morning, focus on "Down" and "Come" in the afternoon. By mixing them up, your dog won't know what to expect, which will keep him guessing, his mind active, and his boredom at bay.

## Consistency and Patience in Training

Consistency and patience go hand in hand with successful dog training. The more you practice a command, the better your dog will understand what you're teaching. More importantly, if you train frequently (daily), your dog will learn faster and retain the knowledge longer. Think about it: if your dog learns to sit today, but you don't practice it for two weeks, he'll forget what the word "Sit" means.

Training consistency means training with your dog every day, following the same steps for each cue, and being consistent with your rewards. And if your dog doesn't grasp a concept quickly, be patient and start at step one. This will create a safe zone for your dog to learn and expand his mental capacity.

## Dog Training as Stress Relief Therapy

Using dog training as a form of stress relief therapy can be beneficial for your stressed out pup. As I've mentioned earlier this type of training triggers the release of oxytocin, which is commonly known as the pleasure hormone. Additionally, it helps to decrease cortisol levels, which's the stress hormone. When their system has cortisol and higher oxytocin levels dogs tend to feel less stressed overall. The key to achieving these results is, through reward based training methods since punishment can actually increase stress and worsen the situation. Remember, making dog training fun for your companion makes it even more effective.

## Connecting with Nature Through Dog Training

Everyone yearns for a connection with nature to bask in the sun feel the gentle breeze and breathe in the invigorating air. What better way to forge that connection than through dog training? Engaging in training sessions outdoors provides both dog and owner with an opportunity to immerse themselves in nature's embrace.

To kick start your training journey it is advisable to commence each session in a tranquil space within your home. This minimizes distractions. Assists your dog in grasping new commands. However soon as their proficiency improves it is time to venture into the great outdoors.

Once your furry companion is prepared for training both of you will reap the benefits of connecting with nature. These advantages include experiencing a sense of serenity and tranquility soaking up nourishing sunlight fostering emotions and enhancing concentration levels. Furthermore, being outside exposes your canine friend to an array of enticing scents that stimulate their minds.

Always bear these fundamental concepts in mind throughout your dog training odyssey. The knowledge gained from this chapter will prove invaluable not, during initial training but also as you teach future behaviors, tricks, commands or engage in playful games. Essentially it sets the groundwork, for your bond with your canine companion. Guarantees a joyful and fulfilling life for your furry friend in the years ahead.