

# The Focus Guide to Jumping up

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# Table of Contents

Why does my dog jump at people? 01

---

Breaking the reward cycle 02

---

Management 03

---

What do we want them to do? 04

---

Calmness is king 05

---

Four on the floor 07

---

Aeroplane feeding 08

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# Why does my dog jump at people?

Dogs jump up at people because...

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- They are excited
- They are worried/overwhelmed
- They are trying to greet the person
- They've been rewarded for jumping up in the past

# Breaking the reward cycle

“If a dog is continuing to perform a behaviour then there must be some benefit to them, if there wasn't they wouldn't continue to do it.”

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## The reward cycle

Fred is a super social dog. He sees a new person on a walk and wants to greet them, he jumps up towards their face because this is where he gets the most information. The person talks to him, laughs as he licks their face and strokes him on the shoulders.

The next person Fred sees isn't quite so enthusiastic about his greeting. He jumps up and sniffs their face, they put their hands on him and push him down.

Fred's motivation for jumping was to interact with the person and get more information from them. In both situations jumping was reinforced.



But the second person pushed him down? They did but from Fred's perspective, he got to sniff them, got some physical contact, and was spoken to. The second interaction wasn't quite as good at the first but he still got some reinforcement from it.

**Everytime a behaviour gets rewarded, the likelihood the dog will do it again increases.** We need to break the reward cycle by removing opportunities for jumping, in the first instance. Fred's owners could cross the street when people are walking towards them, step to the side and ask for a different behaviours, or walk in quieter places.

# Management

“Management is essential for breaking the reward cycle. As owners it’s our job to manage situations to reduce opportunities for jumping.”

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## **Jumping on you when you come in the door**

Remove access to the door when you’re out. Either by using a baby gate, a pen or simply closing doors.

## **Jumping at guests at home**

When guests initially arrive put your dog in another room, a crate, or a pen. Once your guests are in and settled, bring your dog in on a lead, and ask them to settle on their bed.

## **Jumping at people on walks**

Create space between your dog and people, step to the side, cross the road, ask people not to touch or interact with them. If they’re off lead and running off to jump at people, working on your recall and using a long line will help.

**These steps are essential if we want to make an alternative behaviour more rewarding.**



# What do we want them to do?

“This is the most important question to ask when training dogs, regardless of what we're teaching them. Teach them what you do want instead of getting frustrated when they get it wrong.”

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## What alternative behaviours can we teach them?

- **Sit:** this can be a very effective alternative to jumping, however, excited dogs are likely to bounce up and out of a sit. Scattering treats as a reward or throwing treats away from the person can reduce the likelihood of this happening.
- **Go to place:** this involves teaching a dog to station on a bed/boundary/mat/piece of furniture on cue.
- **Say Hi:** Teach a more appropriate way of greeting, this may be targeting the persons hand with their nose or placing their head in thier hand





# Calmness is King

“Jumping dogs are rarely calm. Practising calmness in every day life will drastically reduce jumping”

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## Four Steps to Calmness

### Passive calming activities

Licking, chewing, and sniffing are all naturally calming activities that help dogs regulate their arousal. Giving them their daily meals in Kongs, on lickimats, snuffle mats, or simply scattering their kibble in the lawn are great ways of encouraging calm. (Check out our enrichment guide for more ideas)

### Active rest

Sleep is absolutely essential for a dogs social, emotional, and behavioural health. Make sure your dog has a quiet, comfortable space to snooze in during the day and in the evening. Puppies need 18-20 hours sleep a day, teenagers 16-18 hours and adults still need 12-14 hours sleep.

### Calmness Protocol

This involves looking for those moments on calm and rewarding them. Whether that's calmly placing a treat between your dogs front paws when they choose to lie down on their bed or verbally praising them and stroking them when they greet you calmly. What gets rewarded gets repeated so reward the calmness!

### Arousal Balance

How much time does your dog spend in a state of high arousal? What percentage of their walk is spent charging around after a ball or racing other dogs? High arousal play is fine, and even necessary for some dogs but there needs to be balance. Swap out 50% of the high energy excersise for sniffy walks and brain games to help tip the scale.

# Four on the floor

“What's the opposite of jumping? Keeping all four paws on the floor, so that's what we look to reward. Here are some games you can play to make this rewarding”

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## Treats to the feet

- Bowl a treat away from you and let your dog get it
- When they turn back to look at you, mark 'good' and place a treat on the floor at your feet
- As soon as they've finished eating and **before** they jump, bowl another treat away from you and repeat the process.

## Look don't jump

- You'll need to get your self a helper for this one. Start off with a family member/someone your dog knows well.
- Have your helper stand still, looking away from your dog. When your dog looks at the person, mark 'good' and drop a treat to the floor in front of them. If your dog can't eat the treat or is already on their back legs, you need to be further away from your helper.
- Slowly walk closer and to your helper, marking and rewarding to the floor every single time the dog looks at the helper. If their feet leave the floor, take a few steps back.

Once they've got the hang of these games you can increase the difficulty by asking your helper to be gradually more exciting.

# Aeroplane Feeding

“This game is great for dogs who jump when you have food in your hands and is also helpful for teaching general impulse control and rewarding paws on the floor”

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Ask your dog to sit and reward them multiple times for staying in that sit.

Before they jump, release them by throwing a treat out to the side.

When they come back ask for another sit and repeat.

Hold a treat above your dogs head while they are sitting and quickly deliver it to their mouth.

*If they jump take your hand away, reset and deliver it even quicker next time. The trick is to be faster than your dog.*



Start to move the treat slowly towards them, then quickly speeds up to reach their mouth before their feet come off the floor.

Overtime move that treat even slower until you can bring your hand all the way down to their mouth at a snails pace while they stay in a sit.



“True behaviour change takes time. Trying these things once or twice wont prevent your dog jumping. To get real results you’ll need to employ active management, commit yourself to rewarding the behaviours you want to see more of, and making those alternative behaviours super rewarding.”