

## Why Obedience Classes are So Important

### FOR PUPPIES

#### **Develop Bite Inhibition**

In puppy class, pups indulge in normal puppy play and practice bite control and precision on one another. By nature, dogs have amazing precision and control over their very strong jaws. It's impossible to control everything in the world, though, or to predict it. Sometime, something may happen that so upsets your dog that he's pushed beyond his control and snaps at someone. This is the equivalent of having an argument with a family member; humans verbally "snap" all of the time. With good bite inhibition training from puppy hood, he'll have been conditioned never to put his jaws on people or to bite down, so if he's pushed beyond his limits, he'll just snap the air or, at worst, touch skin without breaking it. Now that's a safe dog!

#### **Become Well Socialized**

You must give your dog the chance to learn to love all kinds of people and to handle all kinds of experiences. Like a person, if a puppy grows up meeting lots of people, going to lots of different places and always having fun on these occasions, he'll grow into an adult dog that loves to meet people and visit places. If a puppy is shielded from new experiences and people, though, s/he'll grow up to be timid and possibly frightened of new things. Obedience class is a great place to expose your dog to new people, new sounds and sights and noises.

It's up to you to provide all kinds of new friends and experiences for your dog. Start with basic manners classes, and be sure to invite at least 5 new people to your house each week. Your socialization training will help your dog feel comfortable and happy around all kinds of people and situations. Your dog will become a true party animal.

### FOR PUPPIES AND ADULT DOGS

#### **Build Communication Skills**

A good training class based on positive reinforcement will help you teach you how to communicate effectively with your dog in an animal-and-people-friendly way. Teaching basic manners (Sit, Stay, Down, Roll over, Come, etc.) will help keep your dog safe, and will greatly increase the pleasure of interactions with one another and with other people. A dog that leaps into a "sit" at your request can't get into much trouble, now can he?

To locate a certified pet dog trainer in your area, contact the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) at 1-800-PET-DOGS or log onto [www.apdt.com](http://www.apdt.com).