

Thank you for considering **Gentle Canine LLC** as your dog training and behavior source!

**What does the trainer certification mean?** The credential CPDT-KA stands for Certified Professional Dog Trainer – Knowledge Assessed. The CCPDT is the governing body. The CCPDT was created by 20 internationally known dog training professionals and veterinary behaviorists working for 3 years to develop a comprehensive written examination. The exam is standardized and proctored (like many professional exams). Any dog trainer meeting the qualifying requirements can sit for the exam.

**I heard you use food in training. I don't want my dog to only do things for food!**

Reinforcement is actually a somewhat complicated subject. Using food in training is easily misunderstood and only a small percentage of what “reinforcement” means. We must consider if the new behavior will be reinforced by food under those circumstances. When we are teaching a dog a behavior, and then he does the behavior, we pay him with food. This is very different than waving a piece of hotdog in front of his face hoping he will do what you ask. When done correctly, food is faded out of the equation early on, and we are left with a dog following the command. That said, we also use tug, sniffing, running, petting, nose work, and playing ball as reinforcement.

**Are you one of those trainers not allowing punishment?** Let's clarify *punishment*.

In behavior terminology *punishment* means to decrease behavior. If you find that you are *scolding* your dog for the same thing over and over, you are not punishing, you might even be inadvertently reinforcing the behavior. Most people think punishment and *correction* mean the same thing, but correction is just a nice way of saying hit, scold, spank, grab, or jerk. If you ask if we use those things during training, the answer is no, but not because we let a dog get away with stuff. It's because we use a better method called engagement. This produces a dog that wants work for us – and that's what we are looking for in training!

**But you have to punish an aggressive dog don't you?** Aggression is serious business. It's also *almost* always based in fear. All peer-reviewed research available today suggests that aggression begets aggression. In other words, harsh tactics that invoke greater fear make the problem worse. Dogs are not looking to challenge you they are often protecting themselves or their stuff from misunderstood situations. A dog that gets pushed over his emotional limits will growl and learn to bite. A dog that learns to bite will continue to bite if it gets the point across. That point usually says *don't come near me*. Every dog has different limits of fear and tolerance. Our training keeps dogs under those thresholds for greater success.

**How do lessons work?** Lessons are conducted at your home and around town. We set an appointment and meet at the scheduled time. We also offer *phone /skype* for those with busy schedules or living outside our service area.

**How much do the lessons cost?** How much does a new couch cost? A ruined carpet? A lawsuit because your dog bit the wrong person? How much does the neighbors Veterinary bill cost from your dog biting Fido -- or a broken hip because the dog pulled you down on ice? Lessons are on a quote basis depending on distance and difficulty of problem. We have quoted you a price by the time you are reading this.

**How often do I take lessons?** As often as necessary. Sometimes (rarely) one lesson can answer your questions or help you figure out how to proceed (re-home, live with behavior problem, get a Veterinary opinion).

**Do you guarantee results?** No. Professional dog training organizations consider offering training guarantees unethical. It is virtually impossible to say that your dog will perform a learned behavior in 100% of the circumstances.

**What if your training doesn't work?** If you wanted to run a marathon you wouldn't show up on race day expecting to finish without a few months of solid training under your belt. Even seasoned marathoners would not approach a marathon this way. The same is true when training dogs. Think of your goal as if you were training for a marathon. You have to practice when you are tired from working all day, on rainy days, hot days, and cold days. You are the biggest factor in your dog's success. Train to win!

**My dog is a \_\_\_\_\_ ( breed). Do you train this type of breed?**

Gentle Canine LLC does not discriminate against any breed.

**What types of behavior problems do you handle?** We handle a variety of manner problems including but not limited to jumping and nipping, leash lunging, chewing on furniture, counter surfing, handling problems, separation anxiety, guarding, multi-pet issues, and aggression.

**My dog has bad hips does that matter?** We will keep everyone comfortable. If your dog cannot do something because of a medical issue we will find alternatives (same goes for the humans, too). When necessary, we will work with your Veterinarian to get all the information necessary to appropriately work with your dog.

**Does The Gentle Canine have insurance?** Yes. All Gentle Canine LLC trainers are fully insured. !

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