

Reasons Why A Dog May Be Aggressive

We're all familiar with aggression in dogs. It can frighten small children and even adults. Some breeds are more inclined to aggression than others but there are often underlying reasons for excessive aggression in dogs and your training efforts will be more efficient if you take these underlying reasons into account. A well-behaved dog that you can trust in most circumstances is something that most pet owners prefer.

Sometimes excessive aggression is because your dog wants to establish dominance. Dogs are pack animals and there is always a pecking order to the pack. The alpha dog is the ring leader and the other dogs follow. Appropriate training will make you the alpha dog or the leader. Never allow your dog to think of himself as the leader or you will continuously have problems. Even so your dog may still want to establish his dominance over other dogs or animals and this may be the reason for his dominance aggression.

Dogs can also act aggressively because they are protecting their territory. Your dog considers certain things to be "his" including you, your home and your family. While this can be seen as a good thing in certain circumstances it can create problems with visitors or neighbors if it gets out of control. If you dog is excessively aggressive in protecting his territory his behavior may need to be curbed.

Often a dog will lash out from fear. Something frightens your dog and rather than retreat he lashes out and attacks. The dog will start growling, pull his ears back and tuck his tail between his legs. Many times this type of aggression is mistook for direct aggression. Fear aggression is always caused by a situation that has scared the dog. He is lashing out because he is scared and does not know how to handle that fright.

Sometimes the aggressive behavior is misdirected. Something happens that triggers an aggressive reaction, such as a dominance or territorial issue but the dog is not able to take out his aggression on the target. He therefore will act aggressively where he is. He may start taking out his aggression on another dog or pet for no plausible reason yet something triggered his behavior. He was just not able to act on the actual issue that sparked his aggression.

There can also be biological issues for aggression. Many times a female dog can be aggressive when they are nursing a new litter of pups. This type of aggression is understandable as she is protecting her litter from any perceived hazards. There is also always a consideration of a medical problem if your dog is overly aggressive so taking your dog to the vet for a thorough examination is always suggested.

Getting your female dog spayed and your male dog neutered can curb aggressive reactions. This also contributes greatly to the good health of your dog. If you are not in the business of breeding dogs it is just the responsible thing to do and it will make your aggression training easier.

Your training exercises to curb aggression will be more effective if you take into consideration the reasons why your dog is being aggressive. Understanding the reasons for your dog's aggressive tendencies can help you to tailor your training efforts to his needs.

About the Author

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