

## Which Training Classes--Group or Private? -

Which type of dog training class should I select? There are many choices. There are group dog training classes to which you bring your dog. You and your family, along with the other members of the class, are instructed and assisted in how to train your dog and how to use that training in solving home dog misbehavior problems. While at times more stressful for the people, group training classes offer the dog the opportunity to learn from and listen to you in a more challenging atmosphere, with other dogs and people as distractions. Distraction conditions are usually when people tend to have less control over their dog's behavior. Dogs are situational learners. Whatever she learns in the quiet of her home may not transfer to on the sidewalk one block away or with another person or dog present. They need to learn in a variety of situations and places; it is a necessary part of the dog's learning process.

Private training classes are usually held at the owner's home. They are less stressful for the people and they may be more convenient timewise; however, they do cost substantially more. Also, the dog's learned lessons may apply, from the dog's point of view, only while she is at home alone with the owner. The instructor usually works directly with the dog and then teaches the owner how to do the same exercises with the dog.

Whichever way one decides, the fact is that, at some point, most dogs need the experience of a group training class with a minimum of 15 dogs participating. Those 15 dogs will bring 15-30+ people—a real opportunity for ready-made distractions!

Choose your dog training class carefully. All dog training classes are not alike—your selection will be reflected in your dog's life and relationship within you family. Be cautious how you apply training methods you watch on television or see/read on the internet. Throwing money at dog training does not always train the dog, and stuffing food/treats in her does not always train the dog.

Most important—find a class in which you and your dog are comfortable. Training is an important first step in establishing an appropriate relationship for the dog in your family.

The Humane Society offers four Puppy & Dog Training Classes each week—Wednesday at 11 AM, Thursday at 7 PM and Saturday at 1 PM. The class is a 6-week session; each once-a-week class is about 1 hour. For information contact Connie at 772-388-3331, Ext. 19.