

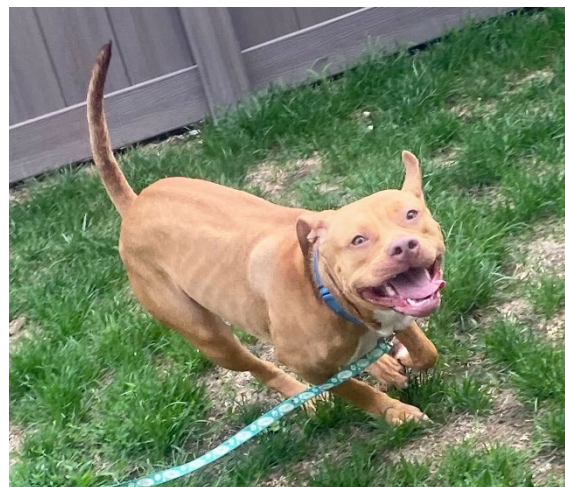
# Managing a Jumpy/Mouthy Dog

The usual profile of a jumpy/mouthy dog is an adolescent or young adult dog with a friendly, confident, and playful personality. Generally, these dogs lack training and never learned behavioral inhibition. They jump up on people, grab clothing or leashes, and become very mouthy during play or when aroused. Usually, this mouthing doesn't hurt, but sometimes it does – it depends on the dog and their excitement level.

When working with a jumpy/mouthy dog, make sure that all training is positively based. Punishment-based training may be misinterpreted by the dog, resulting in increased anxiety, fear, and frustration. All training plans require management to keep the behavior from reoccurring; but exercise, enrichment, and training are also necessary to achieve results.

## Exercise & Enrichment

- Increase your dog's exercise routine to at least two long walks a day (besides regular potty breaks). These walks should be a minimum of 30 minutes each and incorporate different routes for enrichment purposes. Letting your dog go on a "sniffing" walk is also great mental and physical enrichment.
- Teach your dog to retrieve a ball in an enclosed yard.
- Make sure your dog is mentally stimulated! Play brain games and feed them out of a slow feeder, Kong, or other puzzle toy.



## Training

- Always use a "reward marker," such as, "Yes," when your dog completes a training task.
- Teach an auto-sit. Lure your dog into a sit with a treat five times. Wait for your dog to offer a sit without saying anything. Reward by tossing a treat to the side so that your dog has to get up to get it. When they start to auto-sit, stop luring. Practice in different locations and with different people.
- Reward good behavior. When your dog makes the choice of not jumping, mouthing, or mounting in situations where they normally would, calmly say "Yes" and have a playtime or feed a piece of kibble or a treat.
- Teach tug (for mouthing). Get a long tug toy. Keep it out of sight most of the time, and when you are ready to train, bring it out. Ask or wait for a sit (see auto-sit above) before offering the toy to your dog. Give your dog a cue to start, such as, "Take" or "Tug." Have a tasty treat ready within your reach. After 10 seconds, hold out the treat (right in front of or on their nose, if necessary) and say, "DROP!" When they drop the toy, reward them with a treat and praise, and resume the game when you are ready. After they learn drop, you will not need the treat; resuming the game will be the reward. If your dog gets mouthy at any point, the game stops.
- Teach your dog to relax on a mat or bed.

## Management

- **Discourage all jumpy/mouthy behavior from your dog.** Consistency is imperative for results. Withdraw all attention and turn away from your dog when jumping or mouthing occurs.
- **Give your dog an alternative.** Most dogs have specific times that they get excited and tend to jump/mouth/mount. For example, if you know your dog becomes mouthy when you get home from work at the end of the day, put a basket of toys near the front door. When your dog approaches to greet you, put one of the toys in their mouth or toss a toy for them to pick up.
- **Redirect your dog.** If your dog becomes jumpy or mouthy, redirect them to more appropriate behavior by tossing a toy, playing a game, giving them a chewy, or asking them to perform some previously learned basic obedience skills or tricks that they enjoy (sit, down, shake, etc.).

- **Cool-down.** If your dog is getting too excited, provide a brief five-minute cool-down period so they can regain control of themselves in a safe and calm environment. The brief cool-down can be achieved by putting your dog in a crate, tie down (only if supervised), or putting them in a dog-proof room with something to work on by themselves; like a long-lasting chew (stuffed Kong, Bully Stick, bone, etc.). When you release your dog, be prepared with a toy or a treat ready to reward an auto-sit. If your dog jumps/mouths/mounts, repeat the cool-down process.
- Have your dog learn to sit before and during greetings with other people.

If you are not successful in curbing your dog's unwanted behaviors, contact us through our FREE Behavior and Enrichment Helpline at [mohawkhumane.org/behavior-helpline](https://mohawkhumane.org/behavior-helpline). We typically respond to requests within 48 hours.