

# Good grounding

A common problem with a simple solution: dogs who jump on people



**NICOLE BEASLEY**  
DOG WHISPERER

You've just come home from work, and are standing in the hallway wearing your good clothes. Well, they were good right up until your dog jumped up on you with muddy paws. Maybe nanna's last visit ended with her flat on her backside after the dog knocked her down.

A jumping dog is a pest. But patience and determination can stop it fast.

A dog jumps up because he wants your attention. When he jumps onto you, he lets you know he is there. And most of us react by pushing him away or yelling at him. The dog

now knows that at least he is being noticed. Round one to the dog.

The trick is to harness that energy and enthusiasm in a positive way, so both you and he get what you want. You want him to keep his four paws on the ground, and he wants your praise. The solution is straightforward.

When the dog jumps, cross your arms and turn your back. You are refusing him attention. He might try to keep jumping, but you must ignore him. Do not shout or react. The instant that he stops jumping, give him what he wants, your praise, by patting him. If he jumps again, back to square one. Consistency is the key.

If the dog is too big to turn your back on, meet him at the door with a tasty treat. Hold the snack down low to keep him on the ground. When he stops jumping, the reward is his and everyone's a winner.

Put the dog on a lead before all visitors, including grandma, arrive. If he doesn't jump, he gets a treat and a pat from the visitor. If he jumps, he's evicted from the room.



**Step 1:** Dog jumps up

Dogs learn from repetition, so you have to do this over and over until your dog understands the drill.

A jumping dog can be scary to a small child. Parents can teach both the kids and dog some boundaries. Here's a simple exercise.

Tie your dog to a post. Carry a dog treat in your pocket. Hold the child's hand as you approach the dog.



**Step 2:** Ignore and turn back

If the dog jumps, turn and walk away. The dog has lost your attention.

Take two, walk back. If he doesn't jump, the tasty dog treat carried by the adult is his. But if he jumps, walk away again.

Jumping at strangers can cause distress to everyone. Every time your dog jumps on a stranger and gets rewarded with a pat, it reinforces bad behaviour.



**Step 3:** Reward

It's a complex issue that needs to be addressed in a controlled obedience class where the dog learns the best way to get a pat is by staying grounded – literally!

The dog learns the way to get attention is to be calm. And you will be, too. ■

*For more information and advice on this topic and many others, visit [planetk9.com.au](http://planetk9.com.au)*

## Teaching new tricks

- The dog is jumping because he wants attention. Ignore him so you're training him, not the other way around. Yelling at the dog excites him and achieves nothing; it gives him the wrong attention.
- Turn your back on a jumping dog.
- When he stops, give lots of praise.
- Be patient. Be repetitive. Be consistent.
- Use treats as rewards.
- Special efforts are needed to stop dogs jumping on children, the elderly and strangers.
- Dogs want to please, so teach them to earn your respect.
- Be positive.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIZOAN GLENANE