



HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND... TO A DOG

Beyond food, water, and medical care, dogs have three basic needs: Exercise, discipline, and affection, in that order. Being a good friend to a dog means being a calm-assertive leader who addresses these needs. We talked about how we need to exercise/play often. So do dogs. Dogs are used to walking and working for food and we need to give them enough exercise and play time every day to keep their bodies and minds active. Different breeds or combinations of breeds need different types of stimulation.

Identifying what activities might fulfill your dog's needs will help you better bond with your dog. For

example, herding dogs (like collies and shepherds) generally have very high stamina – they are highly intelligent and like constant stimulation. They might respond well to learning new tricks or going for lots of walks. There are lots of fun activities that can help dog owners bond with their dogs.

- What are some other ways of being a good friend to a dog?
(providing identification tags, healthy food/water, veterinary checkups).

The best way to be good friends to our dogs is by being a pack leader – remember, dogs look up to a fair leader and it's up to their owners to fulfill that role. Dogs respect rules, boundaries, and limitations – these help dogs know when and how to act. Remaining calm-assertive, and consistent in how we communicate with our dogs will help to teach them the rules and make sure they are followed.

Finally, showing our dogs that we appreciate and care for them is important. Just like our friends, the better we treat and care for our dogs, the better they are likely to treat and care for us!

- How might you gain respect from a dog?
- What might you do to show your dog that you care and appreciate him/her?

Objective:

Students will learn that although it is tempting to think that dogs crave affection, making sure they have exercise and discipline first, then affection, is actually most important.

Vocabulary Words to Highlight:

Stimulation, Fulfill, Stamina, Bond