



The Pit Bull Lover Gazette

April Issue

[PitBullLovers.com Store](#) | [Visit Home Page](#)

In This Issue:

Editors Corner: Download Your PDF Version [Click here to read this section](#)

Project Pit Bull (the new section): The American Pit Bull Terrier - Common Drives and Sensitivities [Click here to read this article](#)

Pit Bull Training tip of the Month: Leadership Rules and Exercises (Reprinted from last month)

[Click here to read this article](#)

Pit Bull Health Tip of the Month: Beat the Heat

[Click here to read this article](#)

Subscriber Questions: You said you punish your dogs but didn't tell how. How do you punish your dogs?

[Click here to read the answer](#)

Resource Section: Resources and Gear for Pit Bull Owners

[Resources mentioned in articles and tips sections.](#)

[Legal stuff.](#)

Editors Corner: Download Your PDF version of the Gazette



Date:

From: Jason Mann - Senior Editor

In order to download the PDF version of the Gazette you will need Adobe Reader and then come back here and click on the link below to download your PDF copy.

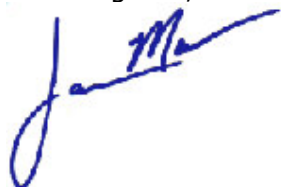
You have my permission as long as the Gazette is kept intact to print the Gazette out and give it to others. Please do not include the Gazette in any books, manuals or other material. It must be given to others separately.

To download the free reader visit [the Adobe Download page by clicking here.](#)

[Click here to download the April issue](#) to your PC or Mac.

Enjoy the rest of this months issue!

Best Regards,



Jason Mann - Senior Editor and Publisher

Project Pit Bull™

The American Pit Bull Terrier - Common Drives and Sensitivities

Before we begin this section I want to say there are exceptions to every rule. Common drives and sensitivities are also subject to this universal fact of life.

Common Drives: Drives are what compel a dog to do certain things. For example, prey drive or the drive to chase moving objects is a common APBT drive that almost all APBT's share. Without prey drive they would not have the instinct or ability to chase and grab a moving animal much larger than themselves.

Another common drive is fight drive. Fight drive compels a dog to fight in the face of a challenge rather than choosing to flee (flight) or stand still (appease).

It is both these drives that make up the core of the APBT and have been selectively bred into the breed for centuries. Without a strong prey drive (chase and grab) and fight drive (confront the larger animal without shrinking from the challenge) you would have a poor catch/fighting dog.

One of the reasons they succeed as combat animals is because the usual flight drive (the average dog will run from a challenge) is not as strong as their fight drive. They would rather face the challenge and die rather than run. This is why they are exceptional fighting dogs.

Common Sensitivities: Despite popular belief the APBT is not a "hard" dog by nature. What is a "hard" dog? A dog that is dominant or as some would say, "hard headed." They are hard in regards to pain threshold however.

The average APBT is quite soft with people and will cower and take abuse from people without putting a fight. One reason why they are so widely abused is because of this softness with humans.

Some dogs will develop other sensitivities. Like fear of water, people, strange objects, grooming etc... But they are not born with these fears. These fears are there because of poor socializing as a puppy. One reason we have so many rescue dogs that are riddled with issues is because they came from horrible homes who did not socialize them as puppies. Yet, there are millions of well mannered, even tempered rescue dogs available.

Bad breeding along with bad socializing (or lack thereof) develops issues within the breed.

The only sensitivity I can think of that the dogs are born with is a human sensitivity. Harsh corrections, both verbal and physical create stress and fear in the average APBT. The

average APBT will not fight back and would rather flee or appease people.

It is this dual use of the drives that makes the APBT so interesting. On one hand you have a dog, they would rather fight than flight (exceptions exist) on the other hand you have a person, they would rather flight than fight. This is the characteristics that make the APBT a valuable family dog and an exceptional fighter.

Homework: Make a list of your dogs drives (prey, play, flight, fight, food, etc...) and sensitivities (water, corrections, tile floors etc...) Be honest. When you are finished if you have more than 3 or 4 sensitivities you will need to work on getting your dog used to those things.

Pit Bull Training Tip of the Month: Leadership Rules and Exercises

NOTE: These rules are from the March issue of the Gazette. I am reprinting them this month because they are incredibly important for establishing yourself as your dogs leader and resource provider.

In the [Pit Bull Lovers forum](#) I have written about these rules and exercises quite a bit. I decided to make this information available in the newsletter for two reasons...

1. Everyone who shares their life with a Pit Bull should know and use them.
2. My motto as a dog trainer/pit bull lover is, "Share my knowledge and do no harm."

Without sharing this information I am doing a disservice to the Pit Bull community. Therefore, here we go...

Why Are These Rules Important?

In order to live a healthy, balanced, and happy life with your dog you must understand that dogs are creatures of habit, structure, and consistency.

Day in and day out they **expect** consistency in their lifestyle.

This is one reason why when people move their dogs start showing behavior problems. They move is causing them to become nervous, fearful, aggressive, or a host of other unwanted behaviors because their routine is being upset in a huge way.

Your dog expects routine and consistency in their life. Their instincts and genetics demand it.

These rules are also important to establish you, in a non-violent manner, as the leader.

The Ten Commandments of Pit Bull Ownership

Yes, they are that important, I call them Commandments for a reason. For the average Pit Bull owner these rules are **unbreakable commandments**. No exceptions.

Rule #1: Thall shall not let thy dog on thy furniture. **Ever.**

This is a biggie. Especially the bed. The bed is your's. The bed is your personal space and since we spend more than half our lives asleep, your bed is the mecca of furniture for your dog. That is where you have relations, that is where you sleep, that is where your skin cells accumulate, that is **your spot**.

Allowing your dog on the bed is like giving a nine year old the keys to your car to drive to the store.

If you are allowing your dog to sleep with you, stop. Especially if your dog is showing behavior problems like jumping, nipping, mouthing, barking at you or your family, or a host of other little things that turn into power struggles.

Rule #2: Thall shall not let thy dog free feed.

One word for this practice. Ugh.

Leaving food down for your dog can be compared to having a child with an eating disorder and allow stocking your fridge with candy bars.

You are allowing the dog to set their feeding time (giving them control of their food and you) and you are also allowing them to learn how to pick at their food. If you've been free feeding your dog and your dog is overweight, stop free feeding.

If you have been free feeding your dog and your dog is food bowl aggressive, stop free feeding.

If you have been free feeding your dog and you are experiencing behavior problems like jumping, nosing your hand for attention, growling at you while eating (red flag!), stop free feeding.

If you can't understand why your puppy isn't potty trained yet and you have been free feeding, stop free feeding. What goes in on a schedule, comes out on a schedule. :o)

Feed at least once a day (I feed one time) and make that time **after you have already eaten.**

Allow your dog to see you eat something (a cracker, a meal, doesn't matter just something) and then set their bowl down for them to eat.

I also recommend asking them to sit and wait for 30-60 seconds before allowing them to eat.

If your dog is food bowl aggressive do the above **and** put the food in the bowl using your hand (dog should NOT be around you at this time). The purpose of this is to mark their food with your scent.

Rule #3: Never allow your dog to leave through a door (any door) before you.

This goes for the car as well. My dogs are not allowed in my truck until I tell them it's okay to get in. They will sit and wait by the door until I say, "ok, let's ride." They are also required to hold a down while riding unless I have them restrained (restrain your dogs please.)

Why do I do this? Because your dog must **follow you** in order to establish yourself as a leader. If they lead you, how are you going to control them? Quick answer, you're not.

By making them wait before going in and out of doors until you have gone through you are telling them that you are the leader that they must wait and allow you to enter first. This is also a patience building exercise for those door chargers out there.

Rule #4: Never let your dog chase kids.

This one is kind of obvious. Dogs are hunters. They **chase down** their food. Kids are not the same as adults. They do not smell like us until their teen years and they do not sound like us either. They squeal, they use jerky movements, their are animated (dogs LOVE animation) and this causes a dog to chase.

Chasing kids gives the dog power over them. It shows the dog that they are in charge,

after all, a leader would not run from them.

Never allow your children to run from your dog. Ever. This will stop the problem before there is a problem.

A word about motion.

Dogs use their eyes for one thing only. To spot movement. They don't hunt with their eyes nor do they use their eyes to identify things. They use their eyes to spot movement, the ears to focus on the movement and the nose zero's in where the movement is coming from and what the movement is.

A perfect example of this is watch a dog run after an animal like a squirrel or a rabbit.

When a dog chases these animals the rabbit **stops in it's tracks and freezes**. Notice the dog responds in the same manner. As soon as the animal stops, the dog stops and starts to use it's other senses (hearing and smell) to locate the animal.

Rule #5: Never allow your kids to chase your dog.

The opposite of rule #4 is never allow children to chase your dog.

Why? First off it could make your dog leary of kids. Not a good thing to teach your dog.

Second, if the dog turns and the kids run from it, it has learned that confronting them results in retreat. Your dog has now learned to turn the tables and treat the kids with confrontation. Again, not a good thing to teach your dog.

Finally and the most important reason is, this teaches your dog that your kids are not leaders but littermates. Littermates chase each other and they turn the tables on each other and it's a game. However they are not going to be living with each other forever and eventually the chasing turns into a serious game of pack placement.

Never give your dog power over your people. **Ever.**

Rule #6: Thall shall not play tug of war

About 4 1/2 years ago I would have not included this into my rules. Now, I have dealt with enough Pit Bulls that are down right rude and crude and the only thing that I see wrong is their people play tug with them.

Some experts will tell you it's okay as long as you win. I am not an expert, but I will tell you this, don't do it.

Spring poles? This is not tug of war with you. This is tug of war with a toy and a structure. You are not playing with the dog the dog is playing by itself.

Remember the last part of rule #5. **Never give your dog power over you or your people.**

Tug of war gives your dog power. How? It teaches your dog to match strength with strength. It tells the dog it is stronger than you and it can impose it's will using this power.

If you've ever had a hard puller shake the tug toy you know that within a second the dog can strip you of the toy.

What have you shown the dog? You have shown the dog that if it uses **aggression** it will win.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to teach my dog that aggression is an acceptable drive to use on me or anyone else for that matter.

It's easier to play fetch or use a spring pole and incorporate training into both.

Rule #7: Thall shall not let thy dog hide under things

As with Rule #1 allowing your dog to claim the territory under objects like chairs and stools and what not can also lead to problems.

If your dog is under your chair, move them out from under it and give them a proper bed to lay in that is out away from their hiding spot.

But Jason, my dog isn't aggressive or they aren't afraid, or (fill in excuse here).

My answer to that is, it's just a matter of time before they start to show you something. Odds are they do, you just miss it.

Rule #8: Thall shall not lavish attention on thy dog for no reason

Okay, I'm going to get some hate mail over rules 1, 7 and 8 for sure. I mean who am I to say that you shouldn't give you dog loads of pampering and attention right?

Well, I'm a guy with a fearful dog that has gotten loads of attention and was made worse when lavished and pampered. Now that I have thrown her out into the world she is not so fearful or pushy. I'm talking about my dog Honey by the way.

I'm also a guy that has seen dogs bite their owners for NOT lavishing attention on them (most are not Pit Bulls by the way).

I have seen Pit Bulls bark, whine, snap, growl, and jump on their owners to get the attention they have been giving so many times before for free.

So yeah, I think I have some new info for those Pit Bull pampering owners.

Stop it.

Wanna know a little secret of mine? My dogs are ignored until I want to show them attention. Oh, you are horrible Jason! Shame!

My dogs LOVE me. Why? Because when I do pay attention to them it's on my terms and my terms are usually fun terms.

The rest of the day the rest and be dogs.

When I say their names, they respond **quickly**.

I'm not tooting my own horn. I'm showing you why lavishing your dog without work is a road map to bad behavior.

Think it about it this way.

We send our kids to school daily. They are expected to **earn good grades**. In return they get things. They can stay out with friends longer, they can borrow the car, they can sleep over with a friend on Friday night, etc...

If they don't get good grades what do we do?

Ground them.

Why should your dog be able to avoid this situation? Your dog is an animal. Not a kid. Your dog is a dog.

They must **earn the right to be given praise by showing good behavior**.

For the record, my dogs get plenty of pampering. But on my terms. They have the best medicine, the best exercise, the best training, the best diet, and they are very well taken care of. All you have to do is look at them. They are not unhappy in their home.

But they have earned the right to go places, to get great food, to get love and pampering by showing me they can behave.

If you pamper your dog for free your dog owns you. You are the slave to the dog and that is not something you want to teach your pooch.

Rule #9: Thall Shall Walk thy dog as often as possible

I asked a lady who emailed me about her Pit Bull who was jumping and chewing on things how many times a weeks she walks her dog.

Her response was, "About once a week. Sometimes twice."

I then asked, how far to you walk her? Do you know?

Her response was, "About three blocks or so. I'm not sure. It's not that far though, I get tired fast."

Can you spot the reason (A) this dog is jumping and chewing and (B) why this lady should **not have a Pit Bull**?

Walking your dog is a bonding experience. It is how you form the strongest relationship possible with your pal.

Try this on for size. Don't walk your dog for two days.

Write down their behavior pattern. Spot jumps, spot chews, spot whines, etc...

Now, walk your dog for 2 days in a row.

Write down their behavior pattern.

Almost without fail two things will happen immediately.

1. Spot will seek you out more and want to be near you.
2. Spot will show better behavior because he is tired.

I notice that my dogs listen better and seek my company out more intensely after our walks. They **love it** when I put a hat on. They know were heading out for an adventure.

Not only does a walk give your dog exercise, the walk also helps you understand your dog better and in turn, your dog learns about you as well.

Lead the walk, lead the dog, earn their trust.

Rule #10: Thall shall never, ever, under any circumstances hit their dog or yell at their dog or scold their dog.

Ever. Period. End of story.

I am amazed by the amount of people who hit their pals. Even a small short slap on the nose damages your relationship.

I am not a push over by any stretch of the imagination. My dogs have rules. They **must obey them** or they are punished.

However, their punishment does not include being hit or scolded with a harsh loud voice.

Let me share some facts with you.

Hit your dog and your dog will eventually bite you, run from you, and completely fear you. Why do this to your pal?

Yelling at your dog does nothing. Your dog has incredible hearing. They hear you. Yelling

does not make them suddenly better in the behavior department. It does nothing to get your message across because they are already misbehaving.

Scolding your dog by pointing, giving them that "I know you did it" talk does nothing. They don't know what they did. They live in the moment. A dog does not care, think about, or have thoughts about the pee it took 10 minutes ago. It is natural for them to do that. Do you think about the pee you took 15 minutes before? Nope. It's something we do.

Your dog does **not know they did something wrong**.

This is one of my pet peeves (no pun intended). If your dog takes a pee on the floor while you were out in your car getting something they do not know what you are upset over when you notice it.

I repeat, **they do not know what you are upset about when you notice it**.

Dogs are masters at reading our body language. They react to that and not the accident they had in the house.

Think about it. When you see your dog doing something you don't like, do you honestly think they say to themselves, "Oh, she busted me, I knew I should have held it. I'm in for it now I will run!"

Not by a long shot. They read your body language and recognize that you are upset. And from previous experience they know you are about to scold them.

I have heard every excuse on earth and then some for not following one or all of these rules.

There is only one excuse for not following the above rules.

Laziness.

When I consult with people and when I take on a dog training client the first thing I share with them is this list. Everyone has a problem with this list. Everyone.

Understand that this is not to make your dog suffer or punish them. This is to enrich your relationship through consistency, rules, and fair treatment.

We expect this of people in our lives and I for one think we should expect it of our canine companions.

Pit Bull Health Tip of The Month: Beat the Heat

Five tips for beating the heat this spring and summer.

#1: Always have cool, fresh water available when your dog is outdoors. You can get a collapsible bowl and carry some bottled water (or from the tap in your home) and keep it in a small cooler.

Cool water can be used for more than drinking. If your dog is getting too hot you can pour it over their belly and it will help cool them down faster. You can also bring a small bottle of rubbing alcohol and rub it on their stomachs as well. When the air evaporates the alcohol it will cool your dog down.

#2: Resting in the shade. If you are walking on a hot day stop every now and again and let your dog(s) relax in the shade for 5-10 minutes to cool them down. At this time you can give them a little fresh water and rub down their muscles to keep them from cramping.

#3: NEVER leave your dog in the car. EVER. It doesn't matter if you leave the window's cracked. Leaving your dog in the car is dangerous and taking that risk is not worth it. My advice, don't do it.

#4: Don't feed your dog too much food before or after exercise (this goes for all the time but especially during the hot days). It will upset their stomach and cause them to get sick.

#5: Watch your dog for signs of heat exhaustion. A few signs are, rapid breathing, muddy gums (think chocolate milk), breath smells like acetone (nail polish remover), glossy eyes, and erratic behavior (having a hard time walking straight and keeping their balance).

In the unfortunate event your dog(s) do start to over heat **immediately put them in the car in front of the air conditioner and put it on full blast.** Again, you can use the water and rubbing alcohol to speed up the cooling down process. Then take your dog to the vet as soon as possible.

Subscriber Questions

You said you punish your dogs but didn't tell how. How do you punish your dogs?

Whoops. You know I didn't say how I punished my dogs. I do not yell, hit, scold, or in any fashion physically correct my dogs. Why? Because I don't want them to fear me. I want them to respect me.

I use 100% undiluted white vinegar as a correction tool.

I put the vinegar in a squirt bottle and when my dogs misbehave I squirt them **directly in the mouth** at the same time I issue a cue. Leave it or off or enough are the three words I associate with the vinegar.

Why do I use vinegar and not water? First, I don't want my dogs fearing water. Second, it's more effective to use vinegar because it works using their natural instincts.

A dog will not eat something that is nasty and bitter. It learns, after only one attempt, things that taste and smell awful are to be avoided. Vinegar is an awful tasting, smelling, all natural liquid that plays on this instinct to get the point across.

A real life example. My neighbor has a puppy that has bad doggy manners. After two direct squirts in the mouth she now understands, "leave it" and will take a few steps backwards when I use the cue. Yes I have the bottle but the words are enough to get her to listen. Remember, it only took, **two direct squirts in her mouth** to get the message across.

Compare that to how many leash pops you would have to use to get the same result and the fact that she would be afraid of the leash, collar and you for doing so.

White vinegar is not harmful to their health either. For a taste (no pun intended) of the correction I gave myself 5 squirts directly into my mouth and let me tell you it was not pleasant.

This is the harshest form of punishment I administer to my dogs.

Resources: Where to find the items and products

mentioned in this months issue

Harnesses: As always we have [custom made harnesses for Pit Bulls located in our shop.](#)

Collars: Black 1 1/2 inch nylon buckle collars are also [in our shop.](#)

Let me know if you want black or brown. These are top notch 6 foot leather leashes that are braided. I love these for training and every day walking.

Shirts and Gear: Visit the [Pit Bull Lovers Gear Shop](#) for a wide selection of shirts for both you and your canine pals.

NEWS FLASH! - Order your copy of [The Pit Bull Training Handbook](#) and I will donate 50% of the proceeds to a rescue of your choice or mine. When you order simply let me know which rescue you want to donate to by emailing me.

There are thousands of dogs in need of our help. Why not help them while you help yourself become a better friend to your Pit Bull by securing your copy today.

If you have any cool resources you would like to see made available in the Pit Bull Lover Gazette send me an email to Jason@PitBullLovers.com and I'll be happy to consider them for addition.

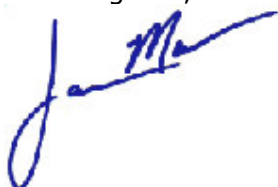
Legal Stuff

Every thing in this email is Copyright © 2005. Jason Mann & PitBullLovers.com

You can pass this entire email to friends if you would like as long as it stays unchanged and left as is.

That concludes the legal talk.

Best Regards,



Jason Mann

Senior editor - The Pit Bull Lover Gazette

Proud Doggy Dad - Angel and Honey. Two of the wildest dogs I've ever had the pleasure of sharing space with.

P.P.S. Do you like The Pit Bull Lover Gazette? Why not pass it on to a friend? You may copy this in it's entirety as long as you don't change anything. Or have them send a blank email to PitBullLovers@getresponse.com

Copyright © 2005. All rights reserved.
[Email:Jason@PitBullLovers.com](mailto:Jason@PitBullLovers.com)

COPYRIGHT © 2006 PITBULLLOVERS.COM & MANN MEDIA ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.