

Checklist: Setting Goals

Here is a checklist to help you set your goals. Try picking only your top ten, so that you can get an idea of what is most important to you. The list doesn't need to be perfect or final; it's just a tool to help you get focused and specific.

AT HOME

- My dog is impeccably **house-trained**. My dog knows where to go potty and goes potty on cue. When she needs to go outside, she gives me the signal that I taught her.
- The crate** is my dog's home. She enjoys her crate, goes to it when asked, and keeps calm inside it.
- My dog **settles down** when I ask her. Although I love it when my dog is enthusiastic, she doesn't jump up unless she's invited.
- Mealtimes** are enjoyable and calm. My dog sits to receive her food and does not guard it from people or other animals. She doesn't bother me when I am eating.
- Grooming** my dog is a pleasant experience. She enjoys being handled while I brush her. She accepts bath time with ease and enjoys being handled and massaged.
- My dog obeys the **furniture rules** and **chews only** what is allowed.
- Although my dog likes being with me, she **isn't so needy** that she shadows me everywhere. When I leave the house, my dog relaxes. When I return, she is happy and mellow.

TRAINING

- My dog and I **love to train** for a quick minute when the opportunity arises. We also love doing our training homework daily and bond more closely while we train.
- Sitting** calmly is my dog's way of saying please. He sits when asked and has learned the situations in which I usually ask him to sit.
- "Down"** and **"stay"** are mastered. When I cue the command, my dog does it without hesitation.
- My dog **loves hearing his name** and is attentive when I say it.
- "Come here"** is mastered. When I recall my dog, he comes to me right away.
- Playtime** is fun for my dog and me. When others are invited to play, they are safe and so is my dog. When I ask him to give back a toy or let go of it, he does so right away.
- Tricks** are now a fun part of our ongoing training. As my dog masters each trick, we are joyful and proud together. I love to show off his tricks to other people.

SOCIALIZATION

- When the **doorbell** rings, my dog is interested, but sits until cued to **greet a visitor**.
- Walking** with my dog is joyful and relaxing. She loves walking on a leash by my side, and she responds when I ask her to finish sniffing and resume walking.
- When we **meet other dogs**, mine is well behaved regardless of what they do.

- When we encounter **strange noises or surprises**, my dog is mildly interested but doesn't freeze or try to fight or flee.
- When we go to the **groomer** or the **veterinarian**, my dog and these professionals are happy to see each other.
- When my dog is allowed to join me **inside a place of business**, she has impeccable behavior. I feel like I can take my dog anywhere.
- Car rides** are peaceful with my dog. She loves to go in the car with me.



Proper socialization helps a dog feel safe and comfortable, even in new situations.

If you were able to narrow the list down to your top ten, good job; that will help you and your dog be successful together. Trust that whatever priorities you pick are going to be the right priorities, and don't worry about the others for now. Don't get stuck on trying to be perfect; in this book, perfect means "perfect for you." If you follow the training program, and are disciplined about doing your homework, you'll go far. After all, if you make no choices, you will end up neglecting your dog's social and emotional needs. So make your choices and feel good about them. Post your list of goals on the fridge or somewhere you can see it. Be inspired by it.