



Preparing for your Initial Consultation with Pawsitive Steps Dog Training

WHO you are meeting with...

Hi, I'm Gayle Ballinger, and I want to help you with your dog and help you get the most out of our training session as possible. I started Pawsitive Steps Dog Training in 1997, serving Seattle with a Pawsitive approach to behavior problem solving, problem prevention, puppy classes, dog skills/manners classes, private, semi-private and day training sessions. After years in the pleasure boating and yachting industry, I cut the lines from a rewarding career on the docks of Lake Union and focused my energy towards "Helping Best Friends Build Unique Relationships."

I understand that you are welcoming me into your home, and will honor and respect your privacy. I have been described as outgoing, vivacious and funny. I enjoy acting, both in the theater and on camera. I also enjoy fishing, boating, archery, knitting, quilting, embroidery and time with friends and family, dogs included. I especially adore puppies, but really all ages and sizes. It is because of my love for dogs and people that I do this, I just want to make a difference in the world... one heartbeat at a time.

DAY of the appointment:

1. If you need to cancel or reschedule, that is never a problem, we understand that things happen! All I ask is that you please call or text me at (206) 799-0521 and leaving a message. If you need to change your appointment or are running late, just let me know. Please do not email me, it will not be seen in time. I will, of course, return the courtesy and ask you to be understanding if I am ill or running late, which can happen.
2. **DO NOT CLEAN!** Please, relax, do not clean for me. I am sure your house is cleaner than mine. I don't look. I have severe sensitivities that can land me in the hospital, so I implore you to not clean house for our visit! Don't use any sprays, detergents, rug cleaners (spot treatment with Nature's Miracle any new accidents, but please open a window.) Unplug or turn off any air fresheners, close the wipes tightly and hide them so you aren't tempted to clean!
3. Have a leash readily available. Unless you are worried I will be bitten, do whatever you are currently doing with your dog when you have a visitor. If you are worried about biting, we need to discuss this prior to your appointment.

WHAT to do ahead of time:

1. Write a list. In fact, everyone who is a main caretaker or lives with the dog should make their own list. Include questions, likes, dislikes, things you want changed, want to stop, want to teach, etc. Nobody gets to cross anything off of someone else's list. This does not have to be formal,

but please print it out or write it the old fashioned way. These get stapled to your paperwork and become part of your records... even if you do like one gentleman who wrote his list poignantly and sarcastically on a roll of TP! As long as it's clean, I will take it and do all that I can to help you resolve the problems.

2. Prepare treats. Food is a primary resource and source of pleasure for dogs. Please prepare a variety of different soft, small, smelly and easily swallowed treats. Treats should be half the size of a pea or smaller. You should prepare a minimum of four completely different types of treats that range from medium to high value with the dog. The go-to list is: Ziwi Peak Dog Food, Natural Balance or Red Barn Dog Food Roll, Zukes, Stella's, Simon and Huey's, Peanut or other nut butter (the shorter the dog, the longer the spoon!), canned food, hot dogs, cheese, liver, meat, etc.

Payment

1. Cash and checks are preferred. There is a \$50.00 fee for any checks that are returned by your bank.
2. PayPal, credit and debit cards. There are fees charged to us when you use your card. To keep our services affordable, we prefer cash or check.
3. Payment is due at the time of service. Options for Follow Up and Continuing Training sessions, Day Training services, and Classes will be discussed during your appointment. A Menu of Services with pricing is available on our website if you want to start thinking ahead. Payment plans for upcoming sessions are available, just ask! We want everyone who needs help to find it.

When I arrive

1. I will be bringing in a few supplies, so I may spend a few minutes at my car getting ready. You are welcome to come out, often greetings with dogs go better outside. This also gives your dog a chance to relieve himself before the fun begins.
2. Please do not force your dog to greet me.
3. Unless I ask for assistance, please do not interfere with your dog greeting me, even if he is jumping on me. I want to see what your friends experience when they come over!! Your dog is writing his own list of issues.
4. I will not immediately try to stop your dog, not control your dog, nor will I do anything to try to "dominate" or "show him who is boss."
5. I will act like any uneducated, inexperienced person might to see what your dog does. I am listening to the dog.
6. We will start the session with a discussion. I prefer to do this wherever you are comfortable. Living room, dining table, whatever your family would usually do. This is the paperwork part of the session. I will have you sign my waiver, go over your lists, my notes and discuss the solutions and how to achieve them. This is the learning part of the session. I will leave you with my training book, "Pawsitive Steps for Successful Dog Training."
7. Then we move into the hands-on or coaching portion of the session where we do the work with the dog. I will demonstrate for you and then everyone else get a turn to work with the dog while I coach you. Everyone should quietly observe while another person works, please ask any questions that you have. Parents and kids may team up to work together.
8. Before you know it, it is time for me to leave.

