

HOUND SCHOOL

Winter newsletter



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www.horseandhoundschool.co.uk

Winter can be a tough time for your dog for many reasons. Many changes happen over this time-Christmas, New Year, and extremes of weather. Don't forget that your dog needs as much of your time as he has during summer when you can walk well into the evening. Dogs often love all the different conditions and types of weather that we get during winter, so make sure you don't just dismiss a dark evening or a bright very cold snowy day as they so often love these types of conditions. Greyhounds and thin coated breeds may need a coat to keep them warm, but they love getting out in the snow and exploring in all different weathers. Dogs will even enjoy a few outdoor games of hiding treats under leaves or under branches or bits of cheese can be squeezed into the bark of a tree this will give you an added bonus of doing 2 jobs at once, providing both exercise and mental stimulation.

I have mentioned using coats above but do not assume all dogs like wearing coats even though you have your dog's best interests at heart. If he freezes or balks when you put a coat on the only solution may be to take it off and leave it off. This is not unusual in dogs so do not try and get him used to a coat if he seems truly distressed, you will just have to try and keep him moving to prevent him from getting cold.



Winter also provides the opportunity to look at how comfortable your dog is in his environment. It is really important that your dog has good quality rest. He may seem to be sleeping but if his ears prick up every time you move or pick up your keys he may not be as relaxed as you think he is. Dogs can suffer from lack of sleep just as we do, and if your dog does not rest and sleep properly this can lead to behaviour problems. Dogs also need to

be able to stretch out to get the best quality sleep so if your dog has a solid donut type bed where he cannot lie full length you may need to have a think about whether this is the right bed for him.

My dog is not housetrained what do I do?

This is actually a very common problem. Many dogs as puppies seem to get the idea that they need to go outside to do their "business", but this can change as dogs become adolescent. This can cause considerable dismay and it is often hard to know why one day he was fully house trained and the next the ability to go outside has "disappeared". Adolescence is a truly frustrating time for dogs and owners alike due to hormones buzzing around your dog's body resulting in your dog forgetting things that you thought he had learnt. Housetraining can also be a problem when you adopt a rescue dog who may never have received any formal housetraining. Both cases need to return to the formula which is recommended when first house training a puppy.

Go out with your dog at regular intervals, and stay out so you know if he has done anything. If you do not go out 1) you cannot reinforce him for doing the right thing, 2) dogs can get very stressed when left on their own when they feel vulnerable and therefore unlikely to get on with business 3) will likely relieve himself when he comes back into the house. Additionally make sure he is not left for hours at a time without the opportunity to relieve himself outside. If your dog does toilet inside the house do not yell at him, this will only make him more nervous, even if he does look "guilty" instead quietly clear up anything he has left. Never use bleach or disinfectant to clean up as it does not mask the smell of urine from your dog and he is likely to return to the same place to toilet. Use biological washing powder or special cleaners with enzymes which can be bought from pet shops

The golden rules apply whatever age your dog is. If you are currently experiencing problems with house training please contact me for advice I will be very happy to help you.

Canine Bowen case study

Bowen therapy is a light touch, hands on therapy that can help relieve pain and injury. It involves no manipulation or harsh movements. Bowen can be very useful in situations where the vet cannot find any definite reason as to why your dog is behaving in an “odd” way, when your dog seems a bit “off”, or has shown a radical change in behaviour. This was just such a case with a Labrador that I saw in the summer. Mischa had stopped going out for walks, although originally she had loved her twice daily outings. The vet had checked her over but couldn't find any reason why she was refusing to go. The days that she refused to walk became more and more frequent, but on her “good days” she trotted out of the house without looking back. She was also happy to go in the car, and then walked, making it all the more puzzling.

After Mischa's first Bowen session she seemed very relaxed but I wasn't sure what exactly would happen so I asked her owner to keep a diary of her walks so we could track any patterns in her behaviour. When I went back after 7 days for her second session Mischa's owner reported that she had happily walked on 6 of the 7 days without any problems. The day she didn't want to walk happened to be a very hot summers day so this could have been why she refused. On her third and last session she had walked happily every day, and her owner was really pleased with the results. Why did things improve? I don't really know but I am glad that Bowen was able to help!

**For more information about Canine Bowen please take a look on my website
www.horseandhoundschool.co.uk**

Do you have a reactive dog?

If you have a dog who is becoming increasingly nervous or anti social with other dogs Hound School can help. The programme aims to help your dog become more confident and to improve your handling skills as additional problems can occur when we become tense and nervous as we tighten the lead. The programme involves a package of 4 initial 1-1 training sessions with your dog. The first one is a theory session (without your dog) and starts off by examining why your dog is nervous or reactive around other dogs. This theory session is important as it gives you coping strategies for walking on your own as well as giving you explanations for the reasons your dog is reacting the way she is.

The further 3 sessions are held outside in a quiet area with one of my greyhounds who will not worry even if your dog is very upset. The point of the programme is to introduce your dog to well mannered and calm dogs in an outdoor situation where she will not be approached unless she is feeling calm enough. We pay attention to your dog's reactions and work quietly until she starts to adjust her behaviour when she is around other dogs.

For more information please either email or call 07910 720961

Have you ever really watched your dog? Knowing your dog's normal status can provide you with amazing amount of information. If his routine and behaviour changes this can alert you to the possibility of ill health. Among things to note are changes in the places that your dog normally sleeps, and what side he normally sleeps on. Does he run and walk in a certain way, or has there been a change in how he moves? Does he prefer walking on hard ground to soft ground or vice versa or does he actively avoid certain areas? If a dog has pain in his legs or is feeling stiff he may want to walk only on softer ground. How he smells is also another indicator to health. Your dogs coat should not smell unduly - every dog has a “normal” smell to his coat and the smell of a dog's breath changes as he becomes older but this should not change radically in a short time. The same thing applies to ears and paws too. Dogs should also have clear eyes without tears collecting at the edges of his eyelids, and any changes here should be noted. A timely visit to the vet with your concerns will cost much less in the long run rather than leaving things until your dog is chronically lame, stiff or exhibiting other worrying symptoms.

