

Requirements for Canine Behaviour

UNDERSTANDING

Focusing on you
Eye contact
Training
Training in different environments

Arousal
Fear
Socialisation
Impulse Control
Walks off-lead (fulfilment)
Breed-specific outlets
Age
Diet
Sleep

Marker word
Luring
Rewards
(food/toy/praise)
Cont. reinforcement
Intermit. reinforcement
Training with games

CAPACITY

MOTIVATION

Canine Behaviour

Many owners become frustrated when their puppy struggles to listen, despite having been to puppy classes and done all the training at home! But canine behaviour is influenced by factors beyond training. Dog behaviour is influenced by understanding, motivation and capacity (see schematic).

Capacity refers to whether the dog has the right emotional state to learn. Puppies are often too tired, overstimulated or frustrated to learn properly. A tired, overstimulated, anxious, or unfulfilled puppy will naturally find it more difficult to focus, regulate emotions, and respond to cues.

To increase your dog's capacity to learn, you can focus on meeting the dog's physical and emotional needs before doing any more training. After that, puppies need clear communication and a gradual training progression to fully understand what is being asked of them. Finally, you need consistent positive reinforcement to keep up puppy's motivation to work hard at nice lead walking for you.

Building reliable behaviour, therefore, involves more than practising cues at home. Puppies benefit from adequate sleep, appropriate enrichment, breed-specific outlets, positive socialisation experiences, and training that is rewarding and achievable. By focusing on both emotional well-being and practical training skills, owners can help raise dogs that are not only well-behaved but also confident, resilient, and emotionally balanced.

If you want professional advice on any of these topics please contact Poppys Dog School to book in a puppy training one-to-one or a puppy socialisation walk.