

Choosing a dog trainer: Quick Tips

a Kinder K9 Mind & Motion Resource



CHOOSING A DOG TRAINER

Evaluate potential trainers to ensure they align with your values and your dog's needs.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

- Certified by a recognized organization (e.g., CCPDT, IAABC, KPA)
- Has experience with your dog's breed or specific behavioral issues
- Can provide references or testimonials
- Participates in ongoing education or training

TRAINING METHODS

- Uses techniques supported by Veterinarians and scientific research (i.e. rewards based)
- Does not use methods that require the use of pain or discomfort for the dog
- Explains their approach clearly and transparently
- Encourages trust-building and communication with your dog

COMMUNICATION STYLE

- Listens to your concerns and goals and is responsive to calls and emails.
- Provides clear instructions and feedback
- Encourages questions and discussion
- Offers written materials or follow-up support

ENVIRONMENT & SETTING

- Training space is clean, safe, and dog-friendly
- Group classes are appropriately sized
- Offers private sessions if needed
- Allows observation before committing

RED FLAGS TO WATCH FOR

- Refuses to explain training methods
- Uses fear, intimidation, or physical corrections (e.g. leash jerks)
- Guarantees results without assessing your dog
- Discourages your involvement in the training process

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What certifications do you hold?
- What is your philosophy on dog training?
- How do you handle behavioral issues like aggression or anxiety?
- Can I observe a class or session before enrolling?