

Stay calm and your dog will get the message

Some dogs have a real desire to get up on the couch and who can blame them!

If you're wondering whether it is okay for your dog to get on the couch sometimes then this section shall explain the rules!

First you must decide what rules you would like your dog to **follow**. Here are the four main options available that will cover off most scenarios :

- 1. Your dog is never allowed on the couch** – this is perfectly reasonable especially if you have very large dogs and a small house.
- 2. Your dog is only allowed up on one designated chair or on a covered area**— this is a great option if a dog really would like to be on a chair but you don't want all the furniture trashed! You can choose an older piece for your dog to lie on.
- 3. Your dog is only allowed on the chair when you invite them** — this is also an option however it can be more difficult for the dog to accept and for you to reinforce if the dog is left alone in the room.
- 4. Your dog is allowed on the couches** whenever they like but they are not allowed to invade your space.

The rules to training a dog to stay off the furniture:

- **Firstly move your dog off silently** – In order to show your dog what the rules are you simply move them off whenever they climb onto furniture that they are not allowed on. You can do this either by pushing them gently with your hand until they jump off, or by taking them by the collar and leading them off. Make sure that when you are doing this you stay very calm, there is no need to speak as this can easily excite the dog and turn it into a game!
- **Repeat** – If your dog jumps back onto the furniture then you simply move them off again. Your dog will understand what you are doing but may challenge you by climbing back up, in effect saying what are you going to do about it? You can repeat moving your dog off 3 or 4 times in succession before you should isolate your dog to give them the message, there are consequences to your behaviour.
- **Isolation** – Any isolation should of course be done in silence and very calmly. This calm but assertive energy is what your dog will pick up on and realize that you are not playing games!
- **Use a short line** – If you have trouble isolating your dog or moving your dog off the couch then leave a short line on using a clip attached to their collar. This way you will easily be able to move them and isolate your dog. Many dogs will gently mouth you in an attempt to stop you from holding their collar and moving them off. When you use a short line they will not and there is far less confrontation.
- **Encourage your dog to their correct place** – Of course if you have a designated place for your dog either a specific chair or blanket then after moving them off the furniture that they are not allowed on you can encourage them over to their chair.

The most important rule of all:

The most important rule of all is that your dog is not allowed to climb on top of you or invade your space when you are on the couch. **Golden Rule No.4** still applies! On your terms when you are ready you can invite your dog up onto your lap for a cuddle but you never let your dog run all over you when they want to! If your dog does try to lie on you or against you without first being invited then simply pick them up or move them gently away, if they are too large then use their collar and if they insist on invading your space I suggest you pop them on the floor.

Again, there is nothing wrong with having your dog lie next to you on the couch but it should be only on your terms.... **Golden Rule No.4**