



# Basic Dog Needs

Bright Eyed Canines

Before we start training, it is important to check your dog has a comfortable home and enriching lifestyle. As Dr. Simon Gadbois says: *“Dogs must be happy in order to learn, pay attention and problem solve.”* I also find that some problematic behaviors are due to dogs trying to fulfill these needs by themselves. Is there anything that might be improved before adding training?

## Basic Dog Needs

Food, Water, Shelter, Safety

1

Social Needs,  
Exercise, Choice,  
Predictability

2

Enrichment,  
Training

3

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**Food:** Check with your vet or canine nutritionist what diet is best for your dog.

**Water:** Make sure there are multiple water sources in and around your home.

**Shelter:** Check that your dog has shelter in the sun and shade.

**Safety:** Always give your dog a way out of a situation. A quiet place at home where people aren't allowed to touch them can be appreciated.

**Social Needs:** Throughout a dog's entire life provide companionship and positive experiences with other animals, humans and environmental elements.

**Exercise:** Mix together short bouts of high intensity movement and mellow movement.

**Choice:** When safe and consensual, allow your dog to choose who they want to greet or not greet. Give them a choice of which dog food they want for dinner. Little things go a long way to building confidence and optimism.

**Predictability:** A rough time frame and order to a dog's day can relieve many forms of anxiety. Consistency in house rules and cues (requests for dog) also help.

**Enrichment:** Letting your dog sniff on walks, eating food out of puzzles, chewing carrots, licking from a kong, learning tricks, playing tug, and more, exercise your dog's brain and help create a wholesome life.

**Training:** Training in a humane way can go a long way to help behavior change, strengthen your bond and teach your dog skills they need in the human world.

I wish you and your dog well,

Amy Hingee

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