Choosing a Trainer Guide and Bay Area Referral List

When choosing a trainer or training method for your dog, the choices can be overwhelming. There are so many options, so much jargon, and what can feel like opinions from all directions about the type of training that is best for your dog.

When choosing a dog trainer, there are a few key pieces of information to keep in mind:

1. **Dog training is an unregulated industry**. This means that *anyone* who chooses, regardless of their education, experience, or methods, can set up shop and advertise themselves as a dog trainer.

2. **Behavior science *is a science***, like physics and chemistry. And like physics and chemistry, it has natural laws, and is extensively studied in universities all over the world. This is important to understand because of #3:

3. **The behavioral scientific community overwhelmingly agrees that using positive reinforcement is the most effective and humane training method.** Studies have consistently shown that aversive methods, such as the use of punishment (discomfort/intimidation) and the long-disproven "dominance theory" to train behaviors lead to behavioral fallout such as fear, aggression, and learned helplessness, and are not as effective as positive reinforcement.

4. **Various certification programs DO exist** that provide a scientifically based, up-to-date, ethical framework for training dogs. Though as stated in #1, they are not required by law in order to call oneself a dog trainer.

Choosing a Certified Trainer

By choosing an accredited trainer, *you're ensuring these trainers have been certified based on a level of demonstrated education around the science of animal behavior* as well as a standard level of professional experience. Additionally, ALL these credentials require proof of ongoing continuing education, which means that trainers will stay on the forefront of the latest and most scientifically supported techniques.

Additionally, dog trainers with industry credentials *adhere to a code of ethics* which supports methods based on accurate scientific research, emphasizing positive relationships between people and dogs and using positive reinforcement-based techniques. "Balanced" training which uses both reinforcement and punishment may sound desirable, but *studies have shown that mixing aversive methods with positive reinforcement can lead to significant behavioral fallout.*

To learn more about industry training standards of practice, check out the following links:

- American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSB)
- Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT)
- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

For more information or to request behavior assistance, visit eastbayspca.org/behavior.

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There are many well-respected organizations that offer education, accreditation, and certificates based on the latest in behavior science. Here is a list of some of the top credentials we encourage you to look for when vetting a trainer for your dog:

IAABC: International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants
KPA-CTP: Karen Pryor Academy Certified Training Partner
CCPDT: Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers
CTBC: Dog Training Internship Academy
CTC: Academy for Dog Trainers
CSAT: Certified Separation Anxiety Trainer
SA Pro: Separation Anxiety Pro Trainer
CCUI: Certified Control Unleashed Instructor
ABC: Animal Behavior College
AD-Pro: Absolute Dogs Pro Trainer

Trainers who do not specifically state their background and methodology, or cite "years of experience" as an alternative to an educated background may expose your dog to outdated or harmful techniques

Certified Dog Trainers in the Greater Bay Area:

Ali Sutch, KPA-CTP
Up 2 Snuff Professional Humane Dog Training

Alisha Ardiana, CPDT-KA, CTBC, FDM, KPA-CTP
Empawthy Dog Training

Amy Cook, Ph.D.
Play Way Dogs

Dan Clark, KPA-CTP
Out of the Bark

Jane Moorhead, AD-Pro Trainer
Game On Positive Dog Training

Kathryn Horn, CTC
Paws and Cues Dog Training

Lea Orloski, CTBC
Canine Centric

Quin Longino, CPDT-KA, CCDT, SA Pro
Pup Professor Dog Training
SEP ANX

Various Trainers, CPDT-KA
Athens Dog Training

Amelia Lindbergh, CTBC
All Ears Dog Training

Ellen Yoakum, SA Pro, KPA-CTP, CPBT-KA
Pet Harmony
SEP ANX

Family Paws Network (various)
Resources and trainers for families with dogs and young children
Kids & dogs

Erika Slovikoski, CPDT-KA
Stardog

Joan Mapou, CTC
Joan 4 Pets

Fiona O'Donnell, CPDT-KA
It's Not Magic Dog Training

M. Cecilia Sternzon, CPDT-KA, MBA
Canine Higher Learning

Mary Stope, KPA-CTP
Mary's Angels Dog Training

Leslie Podesta, CTC
Peak Pup Dog Training
Kids & dogs

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Margaret Daul, CPDT-KA, CPDT-KSA, KPA-CTP, ACDBC
Family Dog Training

Pamela Wyman Van-Rhomberg, CTC, CSAT
DogEvolve (virtual)
SEP ANX

Rebekah Piedad KPA-CTP (virtual or long distance board and train)
Yes Dog

Sara Scott, CPDT-KA, SA Pro
Sarah Scott Dog Training
SEP ANX

Shelly Leong-Peterson CTC, SA Pro
Bright Lights Dog Training
SEP ANX

Stacy Braslau-Schneck, CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA
Stacy's Wag N Train

Kayla Mercurio, KPA-CTP
Kayla's Pet Services

Dani Agnew, CTBC, SA Pro
Oaktown Paws
SEP ANX

Laela Peterson-Stolen CTBC
Scallywag Training

Dr. Dr Mayuri Kerr, IAABC
Dog Ed Training

Shane Stanis, CDBC, CPDT-KSA
Mighty Mutts Dog Training

Tania Lanfer, APDT, CSAT
Cannon Dog Training
SEP ANX

Cory Abshear, CTBC CCUI
Dog Trek Oakland

Anna Wong, CCUI, KPA-CTP
Mutts Have Fun

Naomi Rotenberg, MA, KPA-CTP (dog and cat intro specialty)
Praiseworthy Pets

Caitlin Hill, CBCC-KA, FFCP
caitlinhilldogtrainer@gmail.com

Lindsay Dellas, CPDT-KA, CTBC
Good Dog Happy Dog

Judy and Vero, IAABC
Holistic Dog Trainers
Español

Feline Private Trainers (virtual):

Beth Chapman, ABC (in-person Bay Area)
My Feline Friend

Kristiina Wilson, MA, CCBC
Cattitude Adjustment

Beth Brown, IAABC, CPDT
Houston Cat Behavior

Katenna Jones, IAABC, ACAAB
Jones Animal Behavior

Laura Cassiday, CCBC
Pawsitive Vibes

Patience Fischer, CCBC
Patience for Cats

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Dog Walkers/Pet Sitters:

Sara Bumpus
Soba & Friends Dog Walking/Enrichment

Jazz Aubin CFVP, CPPS, FFCP
Cats with Jazz Cat Sitting/Enrichment

Kayla Murcurio, KPA-CTP
Kayla's Pet Services Dog Walking/Enrichment

Anna Wong, CCUI, KPA-CTP
Mutts Have Fun Dog Walking/Enrichment

Dani Agnew, CTBC, SA Pro
Oaktown Paws

Tim LaLonde
Bright Line K9 Dog Walking

Jeri Hirvela, CCDT
White Woof Walks Dog Walking

Shelley Leong-Peterson, CTC
Bright Lights Dog Walking Dog Walking/Enrichment

Cory Abshear, CTBC CCUI
Dog Trek Oakland Dog Walking/Enrichment

Local Vets With Behavior Experience/Accomodations

Providence Veterinary Clinic Alameda (West)
1409 Webster St. Alameda
http://www.providencevethospital.com/

Marina Village Veterinary
943 Marina Village Pkwy Alameda
http://www.marinavillagevet.com/

VCA Broadway Animal Hospital
4920 Broadway Oakland
vcahospitals.com

Cheshire Cat Clinic (felines only)
4232 Park Blvd, Oakland
https://www.cheshirecatoakland.com/

Paws of Pleasanton Animal Hospital
Santa Rita Sq, 3160 Santa Rita Rd, Pleasanton
http://pawsofpleasanton.com/

Banfield: Danville
812 Camino Ramon Rd, Danville
https://www.banfield.com/

Banfield: Dublin
7100 Dublin Blvd, Dublin
https://www.banfield.com/

These vet practices demonstrated a combination of **fear free** practices, offering **pre-medication** for stress-free vet visits, experience working with trainers to prescribe **behavior medication** when needed, and **offering pain trials** as part of the diagnostic process

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