

Dog Training Articles  
By Beth Bradley

**Positive Training vs. Compulsion**

There are two theories of thinking: (1) All dogs can be trained through positive motivation only and (2) No training can be successful without some form of punishment. I agree with the second statement. No training can be 100% positive because all dogs test to see how much they can get away with. The difference is the amount or type of compulsion that is necessary. To some dogs a stern voice is compulsion enough, other dogs may require a stronger form of correction. The definition of compulsion depends upon the dog and his sensitivity.

The most important step of training is to be 100% certain that your dog understands what you want from him, if your dog is confused or stressed, he is almost certainly going to make mistakes and it is not disobedience. In order to do this you must acknowledge or mark good behavior, this reassures the dog and does not leave him wondering if he is doing a good job. You can acknowledge his good behavior with praise and a reward of some type, food or ball or toys. Your dog's reward should be his most favorite thing. When your dog misbehaves or is disobedient, you must immediately reprimand him verbally and with some type of compulsion if necessary. The correction should immediately stop the disobedience. If your dog returns to this behavior, then your correction was not meaningful enough. If the verbal correction is enough and your dog does not return to the disobedient behavior, then there is no reason to physically correct. but if your dog does return to being disobedient you didn't make a big enough impression on him. It doesn't matter what method of compulsion you use as long as your dog responds, respects and learns from the correction.