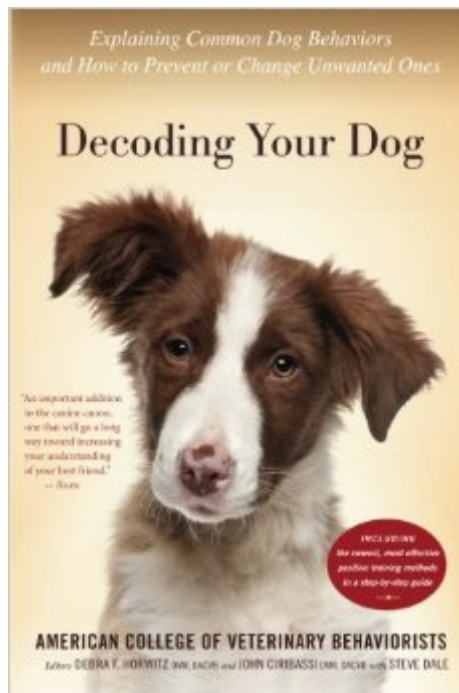


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# Decoding Your Dog: Explaining Common Dog Behaviors And How To Prevent Or Change Unwanted Ones



## Synopsis

Although this book has a scientific basis, it was written in a manner that is easily understandable for laypersons. *Decoding Your Dog* will be a valuable addition to the library of any small-animal practitioner or dog owner.

“Angela Bockelman, DVM, Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association

Unwanted behavior is the number-one reason dogs are relinquished to shelters and rescue groups. Dog owners face a plethora of trainers offering a bewildering variety of advice. From rewards to dominance training, from shock collars to clickers, there are too many theories peddled by too few trained experts. Finally, the board-certified specialists of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists are here to decode how dogs think, how they communicate, and how they learn.

Combining cutting-edge science with accessible and adaptable real-life examples, this is a must-have dog behavior guide showcasing the latest veterinary-approved positive training methods. *Decoding Your Dog* will resolve the complaints, answer the curiosities, and, ultimately, challenge the way we think about our dogs.

[The] authors nimbly craft a basic primer for grasping dogs’ demeanor and in the process offer up the best life insurance policy you can buy for Fido.

“Ranny Green, coauthor of *Good Dogs, Bad Habits*

*Decoding Your Dog* is an important addition to the canine canon, one that will go a long way toward increasing your understanding of your best friend.

“Bark

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When I read the first few chapters of this book, I thought, "I've heard all this before." How to pick a dog...well, I choose shelter or rescue animals, and you don't have the luxury of visiting the breeder, evaluating the parents, etc. I also was a little annoyed at the focus on Veterinary Behaviorists. But as

I read on, I really started to like this book. I liked the in-depth approach to the whys of dog behavior AND the specific methods of eliciting the behaviors you want and discouraging the behaviors you don't. The authors also dispel the 'dominance' myths that some experts use to explain and train dogs. I especially liked the chapter on solving common problems. For instance, one of the common problems is pulling on the leash when taking a walk. Many behaviorists call an act of dominance, and that you have to show the dog who's boss. But the authors argue that leash pulling is not a dominance problem (they use a case to explain); it's a behavior problem. They then go on to discuss how to solve it--step-by-step. They also talk about the tools you need to solve it (no retractable leash, the right collar, etc.). Of all the training books I own, I think this is the one that I'll keep at hand. It not only gives clear solutions to problems, but also does so in a positive, humane way. I'm glad that I took a chance on 'another' dog training book. This one was worth reading.

You can't go wrong with this book if you have or want a dog. An excellent book to get before you bring a dog into your family. It should be required reading before anyone gets a dog. I asked Vine to send me this book for the reasons most will be drawn to it: I have a dog that has behaviors I don't understand and I need some help. I did not find the solution, but no book is perfect. What I did find was solid information about the overall training of and living with dogs and some insightful, credible, science-based information about why dogs do what they do. I did not know the book was written by veterinarians, which may have turned me off. HOWEVER, author Steve Dale has done a great job of making the book readable or the vets were good writers because the book is engaging and clever. Information is presented with examples of specifically named dogs, which brings the information to life; pictures are included; and each chapter has a wrap up "What Did we Say?" Since each chapter was written by a different person as is common in books by academicians, there is no index\*, which I would have liked, but each chapter is a jewel. The chapter "I Know They're Normal Behaviors, but How do you Fix Them? Common Problems That Can Drive any Dog Owner to Howl," should be required, like a marriage license. "Can't we Just Talk?" and "Creating a Mensa Dog?" are also standouts. As I have an older dog in my family and have ushered two other dogs through their older years, I really appreciated the chapter on "Dogs with an AARF Card." The chapter on phobias, "I know it's going to rain, and I hate the Fourth of July," is another that can save lives because as the book points out, "unwanted behaviors is the number-one reason dogs are relinquished." This is a much-needed book from experts in a critical field that can help more dogs remain in the home and not homeless. If you have a dog or want a dog or know anyone who has or wants a dog, you owe it to yourself or them to get this book. It's great. I wish I had thought of it.\*Update: Per the comments

below, after further inspection, apparently an index is a part of the final version.

I have had dogs my whole life. And yet, I still learned quite a bit from this book. The biggest mind shift you are likely to make is the realization that we all anthropomorphize the mind of a dog. Dogs act and react inside of the canine mind, and we really need to stop assigning our values to their thought processes. The more successful you are at doing that, the more rewarding the relationship will be for both of you. In these pages you will find the most recent advances in the study of canine behavior. This is a combination of collated clinical observation and specific examples of these concepts in practice. If you really want to climb into the noggin of your dog and foster a mutually beneficial relationship than I can't recommend this book highly enough. You get the input of multiple veterinarians in a skillfully woven cloth, rather than a patchwork of differing views. The overall message here is both unified and accessible. I find myself going back for specific sections constantly.

If you still believe in the Alpha-Dog Myth you need to read this book. If you think a choke collar will teach you dog to heel " read this book. If you believe your dog is trying to punishing you by defecating on the carpet " read this book. If you think the he looks guilty after shredding your pillows " well you get the idea. At its core this book tries to explain dog behaviors. It also tries to teach humans how to better understand and communicate with "Man's Best Friend". As the book teaches these communication skills it also debunks many long-standing dog behavior myths (alpha, dominance, force based training, etc). The first part of the book deals more with selecting and training a new puppy; while the second part discusses how to deal with issues in adult dogs (jumping on visitors, pulling on the leash, clipping nails, brushing teeth, socialization, mental and physical exercise for you dog, etc). There are also extensive sections on dealing with aggression, separation anxiety, sound phobias, and compulsive behaviors. But to me the most eye-opening part was the discussion on dog aging. I didn't realize that dogs suffer from CDS (cognitive dysfunction syndrome), a condition similar to human Alzheimer's disease. So if you are getting a new dog, or if you have a dog with some frustrating habits, this book is well worth reading. The only negative thing I have to say about the book is that I found it a little dry (and just a tad boring). It is not a quick or an easy read, but it is a very educational and enlightening.

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